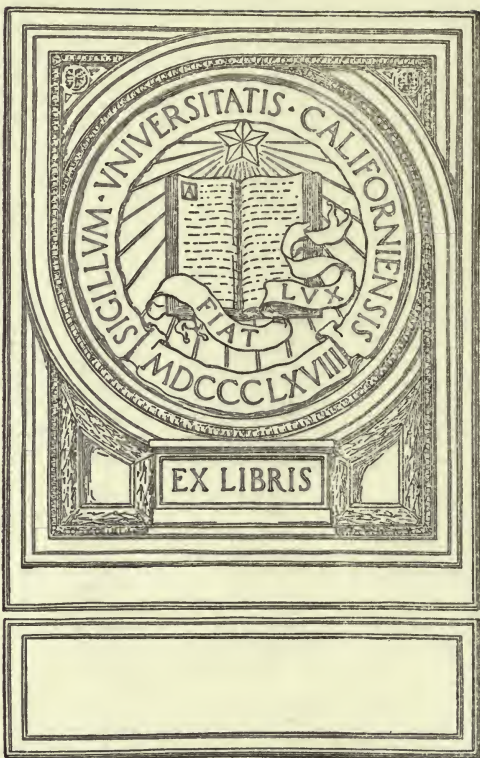


# THE LEGENDS AND TRADITIONS OF A NORTHERN COUNTY



JAMES FENIMORE COOPER







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OF A  
NORTHERN COUNTY**



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NORTHERN COUNTY

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

COOPERSTOWN, MAY, 1920

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by  
James Fenimore Cooper

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THESE SKETCHES  
ARE DEDICATED TO  
MY FOUR SONS  
IN MEMORY OF MANY  
HAPPY DAYS SPENT WITH THEM  
IN  
"OLD OTSEGO"

M270335



## FOREWORD

THIS is not a history nor, strictly speaking, merely Legends and Traditions; it is less than the former and perhaps more than the latter. The facts are correctly stated where given, the anecdotes and legends are repeated as told to me by members of an older generation, and my own experience and impressions are truly set forth.

The whole was written with the hope of preserving for future generations of my family the life and the thoughts of people living under conditions which are gone forever, and of creating in the minds of its readers the atmosphere in which they lived, struggled, died, and were buried.

It is written in compliance with repeated requests of my four sons, in fulfillment of my promise to each of them, and with the hope that it may foster in those of my descendants who may read it a love of the beautiful country with which their ancestors have been so closely associated for generations. If it does this, and perhaps induces them to familiarize themselves to a greater extent with the history of the town and county and State, I shall feel that it is well done.

J. F. C.

COOPERSTOWN,  
*May, 1920*





## AN INTRODUCTION

IN 1612, three years after Hendrick Hudson came to Albany, and eight years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, two Dutch explorers came up the Mohawk from Albany (Fort Orange), crossed over the hills to Otsego Lake, and went down the Susquehanna Valley. They undoubtedly stopped at the Indian village which then occupied the site of Cooperstown, and were the first white men known to visit this country. They filed a map of their wanderings in Amsterdam, where it was found a few years ago.

Probably an occasional white man, priest or trader, visited Otsego Lake during the next century, but no settlement was attempted until Rev. John Christopher Hartwick, a Lutheran minister, thinking the lake was on his patent, started one about 1761. He abandoned it on finding that his line ran a mile or two further south. A little later, in 1770, came George Croghan, Sir Wm. Johnson's successor as Indian agent, and one of the patentees of the tract of 109,000 acres on which the lake and town are situated, and built a log house and outbuildings, and lived here with his family until just before the Revolution.

During the war the red Indians under Brant and the more brutal blue-eyed ones under Butler made this lonely spot unsafe for settlers, and it was abandoned to the wilderness.

In 1779 Gen. Clinton with his troops, on their expedition to punish the Six Nations, camped here for several weeks, built a dam at the source of the Susquehanna, broke it, and went down on the flood.

Again the wilderness closed in on the vestiges of the settlement, until, in 1785, William Cooper arrived on horseback with his gun and fishing rod. He camped on the spot, returned to his home in Burlington, and bought about 50,000 acres, including the present village site. The next year he started a settlement and a few years later brought his family and servants from Burlington, N. J., and lived here until his death in 1809.

The town, known first as "Foot of the Lake," then as "Cooperton," and "Coopers Town," and for a short period as "Otsego," finally settled down to the "Coopers-town" of to-day.

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THE LEGENDS AND TRADITIONS  
OF A  
NORTHERN COUNTY





# The Legends and Traditions of A Northern County

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## EARLY SETTLEMENTS AND SETTLERS

THE Colony of New York was unlike any of the other colonies and states in the manner of its early settlement and the character of its land holdings.

When the Dutch West Indies Company began the settlement of the vast territory, which eventually shrank to the Colony of New York, it conveyed great tracts of land to patroons, who had to furnish a certain number of settlers to make good their title. Within the limits of their grants these patroons had great and autocratic powers.

When the English took over the colony all these grants were confirmed and eventually erected into manors. For years the English continued to grant great tracts of land as manors. In this way Long Island, Westchester County, and the Hudson Valley to a point above Troy were settled.

The difference between ordinary grants of land,

such as were made later in the Colony of New York and in other colonies, and manorial grants was legally a technical but in reality a very real one. The Lord of the Manor had autocratic power over his tenants within the Manor; he held courts, civil and criminal; he could punish his tenants as he had "The high justice, the middle justice and the low." In fact, generally speaking, he stood between his tenantry and the colonial or home government. Since the 13th century, there have been no manors erected in England. There were no others in this country except a few small ones in Maryland and one doubtful one in New England, and perhaps one or two in the south.

The grantees or lords of these manors built their manor houses and lived in royal style on their domains, surrounded by their tenantry. In this way there grew up in the Colony of New York a great landed aristocracy which had no equal anywhere else in this country. Some of the manors were enormous. Tangier Smith's Manor of St. George was originally fifty miles wide on the ocean and sound and of that width across Long Island.

The Van Rensselaer Manor at Albany was twenty-four miles on either side of the Hudson and forty-eight miles east and west. The Patroon had a fort on Baeren Island at the beginning of his lands and made every boat which went up or down the Hudson salute his flag.

There was an attempt to create a manor in the lower Mohawk Valley, but its immense size caused such an outcry that it was abandoned, and no more were created. I think that, all told, there were twelve manors in the State, and one great patroonship never erected into a manor. Later lands were granted in great tracts but without manorial rights in the patentees. The land grants followed the important streams first and then filled in the less valuable land lying away from the navigable waters.

Among these patents were those about Coopers-town. The great Croghan or Cooper Patent (1769) contained one hundred thousand acres and nine thousand additional for roads. It ran from about the point where the Oaks Creek joins the Susquehanna up along the west bank of the river to Otsego Lake; along the entire west shore of the lake to where the little stream which runs in front of Swanswick empties into the lake; then a long arm ran off toward Springfield Center and back and the line ran west crossing Schuyler's Lake, and thence west beyond Wharton's Creek and down to a line running west from the village of Mt. Vision and south of Gilbert Lake; then back to above the Village of Hartwick and off east to the place of beginning.

Judge Cooper had about forty-five or fifty thousand acres of it in all; but immediately parted with about fifteen hundred.

In our neighborhood there were also the Miller Patent, upon which Fynmere stands, of thirty thousand acres; a part of this, I think about ten thousand acres, came to the Bowers family; the Hartwick Patent, south of the Cooper (1761), containing twenty-one thousand five hundred acres; the Springfield Patent, upon which Hyde Hall stands, with eighteen thousand acres; the Butler Patent of forty-seven thousand; the Otego, with sixty-nine thousand and the Morris with thirty-three thousand. In all of these, with the possible exception of the Miller and Morris, Judge Cooper was heavily interested.

Some purchasers took large tracts out of these patents, and they were the ones who, with the patentees, built the great houses which are scattered over the countryside. It was from the owners of these vast tracts of land that the villages took their names: Cooperstown, Morris, Gilbertsville, and Sangerfield got their names in this way.

Of one of the patents on the Susquehanna an interesting story is told. Before the Colony would grant any land, the would-be purchaser had to acquire the Indian title. The tale runs that among Sir William Johnson's Indian guests at dinner one day was Red Jacket, a famous Seneca Chief. Sir William happened to be wearing a new uniform just received from England; Red Jacket eyed it enviously and the next



morning said to Sir William: "Quider, I dreamed a dream last night." Sir William asked, with sinking heart, "And what did you dream?" "I dreamed that you gave me that red coat you wore yesterday." Sir William well knowing Indian etiquette, passed over the uniform and Red Jacket went away proud and happy.

In the fall Sir William made his usual annual trip among the Indian villages and spent a night with Red Jacket. In the morning he said, "Red Jacket, I dreamed a dream last night." Poor Red Jacket asked him what he had dreamed, and Sir William replied: "I dreamed that you gave me thirty thousand acres of land." Red Jacket said nothing, but looked solemn and no doubt considered the price high for the "Red Coat." However, in due time he arrived at Mount Johnson with an Indian deed for 30,000 acres of land which he handed to Sir William with the remark: "Quider, do not dream again."

The facts were forgotten, and the story was considered a pretty legend of Indian customs, until there was found, in the Otsego County Clerk's office, the deed of a lot of land, described as being "In Sir William Johnson's Dreamland Tract." This located the land as lying along the Susquehanna not far from Unadilla.

There was one celebrated settlement planned, but never made, on the banks of the Susquehanna; in 1794

Coleridge and Southey, at Oxford, organized the "Pantisocracy," which was to found a Utopia on "the banks of that river in America with the beautiful name—Susquehanna." Robert Lovell joined the Pantisocrats and the plan was developed. They found three enthusiastic maidens willing to venture to the Susquehanna; Coleridge and Lovell married two of them and Southey became engaged to the third.

The men were to till the soil and write; the women were to care for the homes and the children; and all were to converse. Everything was arranged for except the necessary money. To raise this Coleridge and Southey lectured and wrote. Unfortunately the scheme never materialized and the banks of the Susquehanna only benefitted to the extent of having a small club named for the "Pantisocrats" over a century later.

Other legends cling to the river, and other settlements grew up; some of them commercial only like Phoenix; some educational like Hartwick Seminary, founded by John Christopher Hartwick, the Lutheran minister, in the early 19th century and still prosperous; and some like Unadilla beautiful only, alike in name and location.

There is a story about a settlement at or near Unadilla which illustrates the rough and ready life of the days when this country was new. They were the times when virile men lived and struggled, drank, fought, and

died young, crowding the activities of a long life into a short one.

One day, years ago, I met, gossiping with the two artists P—— and T——, whose story I have told elsewhere, a third old man. When my name was mentioned, he laughed and said, "We ought to be friends as my grandfather knew Judge Cooper and once threw him in a wrestling match." Of course I was interested and he told me the following tale: He came from Unadilla and his people had been among the early settlers there. The land they lived on and were cutting out of the wilderness, either belonged to Judge Cooper or he was agent for it. There came a bad year; the crops failed and the settlers could not meet their payments of rent or the installments on account of the purchase of the land. A public meeting was called and, as the result, one of them was chosen to go to Cooperstown and present their cause to Judge Cooper. The delegate was my informant's grandfather. He started on the long, sixty-mile trip to Cooperstown, while the settlers anxiously waited. He found Judge Cooper at home and stated his case, no doubt eloquently, for when he had finished the Judge said: "You think you are something of an athlete, I think the same of myself, suppose we try a wrestling bout; if I throw you, your clients must find a way to pay; if, on the other hand, you throw me, I will give you a receipt in full for the whole settlement."

The bargain was struck, the furniture moved aside, and the wrestlers closed with one another.

The Lord was with the suffering settlers and their champion smote the Judge hip and thigh and laid him on his back on the library floor. True to his word, he wrote out the receipt and the champion returned triumphant to his anxious neighbors. There is no record of what this fall cost Judge Cooper.

From this and other anecdotes one can understand why he was such a popular and successful maker of settlements.

Within the limits of the so-called Cooper Patent are, besides the Village of Cooperstown, Fly Creek, Summit, Toddsville, Bourne, Oaksville, Schuylers Lake, Patent, Snowden, Burlington Green, Burlington Flats, West Burlington, Hell Town, Garrettsville, New Lisbon, Welcome, Lena, Wharton, Edmeston, Lows Mills, and Fall Bridge.

Lows Mills, one of the oldest settlements on the Patent, was made where Swanswick now stands and the little pond in front of it is the old mill pond.

The actual earliest settlement, with the exception of Hartwick's mistaken beginning on the Lake, was George Croghan's at Cooperstown; but this was abandoned just before the Revolutionary War, although one at least of the buildings was standing when William Cooper came in 1785.



The following is a verbatim copy of the earliest letter which I know of from a settler on the lake. Where the writer was living, I do not know, but think that it must have been somewhere near the locality of what was later called Lows Mills. If Mr. Hicks had been half as ingenious in other ways as he was in misspelling, his fame would have lived until to-day and his home in 1773 would now be known to all.

Lake Otsago October 3th 1773

SIR

I imbrace this oportunity to lett you know that my Family is in good helth & wish these lins will find you & your Lady in the same we hed the new by a chance news paper which plesed mutch & we all wish you joy/ the Settlement gos on flourishing "will soon becom a fine Countrey/ Year is a grate maney welthy men is willing to become Settlers as soon as they can know the seling price of the Land/ the Settlers at the Butternuts hath made a good opening & as taken som of thir Fameies out this Summer/ I have sold my Land at the Butter nuts & am going to settel at the Adgo manesty ware with me all winter & proved not with Fole which I am sorrey for/ Nathanel Edwards as had him at the Adego all this sumor/ Thomas Wise will Inform you how afairs goe on hear/ I have a mind to com down my self if my Busnis will permit/ I have had verey bad luck this Sumor with my Cattel I have lost 1 Cow & 4 Calve & 1 Horse/ my Crop of wheat & my Ry Sufferd verey mutch by a hale storm/ the stons of which ware Seven Inches Round but Hope with the help of Providence I shall make out til my next Crop coms in/ Sir if I can be of aney sarvis to you in this part of the worls I shall be

verey Redy to Sarve you to the utmost of my Power/ Hear is a better understanding betwen us that came up first to what it wars wen we first com hear but I have Sufferd verey mutch in my Carecter & Pocket/ but I hope you are all convind of what as been said to be false/ my Wife is verey well satsified hear & Rembers hir Kind Respeck to your Spous & all your famely so I remain your

Humbel Sarvant

JOHN HICKS.

N.B. Thomas Wise as been at work this two Sommers for Nathanel Edwards ware to hve Land Cleared by this fawl according to agreement but Thomas Seeing no likleywood of his performing his promis thought of aplying to you to help him forward pray dont let Nahanel now I have mentend aney thing concernig him for I want now ill blood.

One cannot help feeling grateful that the "hale stones" have not grown in the past hundred and fifty years.

The great patent as appears on the old maps was eventually subdivided among the following owners:— C. P. Low 7,500 (Prevost and Cary), V. P. Dow 12,000, C. Colden 14,000, Vanveeler & Lansing 1,500, G. Bowne 1,500, Verree 1,500, J. Lonston 1,500, E. Wells 9,000, R. Smith 4,000, H. Hill 2,000, John Cox and daughter 6,000, Susanna Dilwing 6,000. The balance came to Judge Cooper and Andrew Craig, of which 1,500 acres went to one Ellis. Cooper bought out Craig in 1798. Susanna Dilwing and Hill called their tract Bloomfield

after a governor of Pennsylvania. Eighteen thousand acres of the Butler patent was known as Hillington after its owner, one H. Hill.

This is Mohawk country and the Indians who lived at or near the foot of the lake belonged to that tribe, the fiercest and perhaps the greatest of North American Indians. They kept the eastern door of the Long House of the Six Nations. Hendrick and Brant were chiefs of the tribe. Over Hannah's Hill ran one of their war trails to the south which quite recently could be easily followed. It was about eight inches wide and six deep, worn by innumerable moccasined feet travelling single file through the centuries.

While we cannot actually claim it as a local story, the hero of an Indian tale, which Governor Seymour was fond of telling, may have lived in our Indian village or hunted and fished here; or helped wear the trail over Hannah's Hill, and thus give it a sufficiently local color to justify repeating it: Among the tribes which were held subject by the Six Nations was one on Long Island. One year they declined to pay the annual tribute of wampum. A council of the Six Nations was held and a Mohawk chief delegated to visit the rebellious tribe and enforce payment. Alone he went down through the hostile country to the chief village of the subject tribe. A council was called to hear his message. When it was assembled, he asked who had advised not paying



the tribute. A chief arose. The Mohawk stepped up to him and brained him with his tomahawk saying, "This will teach you not to disregard the orders of your masters." He returned unmolested to his native village and the tribute was paid.

Governor Seymour, a great admirer of the Six Nations, used to add: "There is nothing finer in Roman History."

It may not be out of place to repeat here the following quotation from Judge Cooper's account of his settlement of this country, written in 1807 for William Sampson and published in Dublin in 1810 under the title of *A Guide to the Wilderness*.

In 1785 I visited the rough and hilly country of Otsego, where there existed not an inhabitant, nor any trace of a road; I was alone, three hundred miles from home, without bread, meat, or food of any kind; fire and fishing tackle were my only means of subsistence. I caught trout in the brook and roasted them in the ashes. My horse fed on the grass that grew by the edge of the waters. I laid me down to sleep in my watch coat, nothing but the melancholy Wilderness around me. In this way I explored the country, formed my plans of future settlement, and meditated upon the spot where a place of trade or a village should afterwards be established.

At what he considered the close of his career, at the age of fifty-four years he wrote as follows:

I began with the disadvantage of a small capital, and the encumbrance of a large family, and yet I have already settled more acres than any man in America. There are forty thousand souls now holding, directly or indirectly, under me, and I trust that no one amongst so many can justly impute to me any act resembling oppression. I am now descending into the vale of life, and I must acknowledge that I look back with selfcomplacency upon what I have done, and am proud of having been an instrument in reclaiming such large and fruitful tracts from the waste of the creation. And I question whether that sensation is not now a recompense more grateful to me than all the other profits I have reaped. Your good sense and knowledge of the world will excuse this seeming boast; if it be vain (we all must have our vanities), let it at least serve to show that industry has its reward, and age its pleasures, and be an encouragement to others to persevere and prosper.

One other quotation has a personal touch which justifies its insertion here. It is from a letter written by James Fenimore Cooper in 1833 or 4, giving an account of his first trip to Cooperstown after his return from Europe. He describes the changes along the Mohawk Valley and says:

On returning to the inn I made an arrangement to go in the same car with Mrs. Perkins and her party to Schenectady, and thence to this place in an extra, which is a sort of posting. We were well served, no delay, not longer than in France a hundred miles from Paris, and got here, 56 miles from Albany, at six o'clock. This place is redolent of youth. It is now sixteen years since I was here. Roof's

tavern, which I remember from childhood is still standing, altered to Murray's, and the road winds round it to mount to Cherry Valley as in old times. But the house is no longer solitary. There is a village of some six or eight hundred souls, along the banks of the canal. The bridges and boats, and locks give the spot quite a Venetian air. The bridges are pretty and high, and boats are passing almost without ceasing. Twenty certainly went by in the half hour I was on them this evening. I have been up the ravine to the old Frey house. It looks as it used to in many respects, and in many it is changed for the worse. The mills still stand before the door, the house is, if anything, as comfortable and far finer than formerly, but there is a distillery added, with a hundred or two of as fat hogs, as one could wish to see. I enjoyed this walk exceedingly. It recalled my noble looking, warm hearted, witty father, with his deep laugh, sweet voice, and fine rich eye, as he used to lighten the way, with his anecdotes and fun. Old Frey with his little black peepers, pipe, hearty laugh, broken English, and warm welcome was in the back ground. I went to the very spot, where one of the old man's slaves amused Sam and myself with the imitation of a turkey, some eight and thirty years since; an imitation that no artist has ever yet been able to supplant in my memory.

## LOCAL NOMENCLATURE

SOME of the names of roads and places about Coopers-town are interesting and already their origin is lost in the past.

Of the hills we have "Hannah's Hill" named for Hannah Cooper; and Mt. Vision, opposite to it, named by Judge Cooper, I believe. Down to the southeast of Red Creek we have Eggleston Hill, named from the family that settled on it; then moving north, up the east side of the Red Creek Valley,—Hell Hill, from the difficulty of climbing it; Murphy Hill, from the family that lived at its base in the Cherry Valley; Johnnie Cake Hill and next Sweet Ireland, the latter the northerly part of Johnnie Cake; Sweet Ireland came from the settlement of Irish which has about disappeared, but Johnnie Cake no one to-day can explain.

Of the roads—the Cornish Road runs up from Bowerstown (Dogtown) and over to the Cherry Valley toward the south. Nothing is known of the origin of this name; there may have been a family of Cornishes living on or near it when settlers were few and the roads took the names of the adjoining land owners; there is no town of the name anywhere near; or the great beauty



of the view from it may have recalled to the mind of some traveled resident the beauty of the Cornice Road and who suggested, half in jest, calling it that, easily corrupted to Cornish.

To the north are the Murphy Hill Road and the Sweet Ireland Road. From Red Creek Farm No. 2, there branches off to the east the road known as "Pink Street," why or wherefore no one can tell.

"Stoney Lonesome" tells its own tale; it is in the shallow hollow of the hills between Lentsville, in the Red Creek Valley, and the Lake. The old house has completely disappeared and the roads running through the hollow, one of them the "Mosquito Road," have been abandoned and closed. Going to it from either of the eastern approaches via Middlefield Center or Lentsville, the road passes large and once prosperous farmhouses, now abandoned to the fate which has already overtaken the Stoney Lonesome house and many of its contemporaries.

The roads grow rougher and more difficult to follow until they become impassable or are fenced off. The trip across, an attractive one twenty-five years ago, can now only be made on foot or horseback. This secluded, shallow, bowl-shaped valley among the hilltops has all the wonderful charm of the country; the rough fields overgrown with a great variety of colored weeds; the low wooded hills; the abandoned fences and almost

vanished evidences of occupation unite to make the spot not only "Lonesome" but beautiful. The lay of the land and the ever-changing color of the clearing fill the eye, while the loneliness and vanishing evidences of cultivation appeal to the imagination. One wonders why, scores of years ago, any settler had the courage to clear the fields and build the often great farmhouses. Conditions of life were harder then, when all this labor was expended, than they were when the places were abandoned and fell to ruins.

Near Stoney Lonesome is Eagle Hill, with a marvelous view of the country, but the abandonment of the roads and the growth of the trees has long made it inaccessible and now even its location is forgotten.

On the other side of the lake, almost opposite, and close to the short road from Cooperstown to Richfield, is "Rum Hill"—in these more polite and prohibition days called "Mount Otsego." The story runs that, at a conference between the early settlers and the Indians, a barrel of rum figured as the consideration of a proposed sale. A disagreement arose, and some one pushed the barrel over the edge of the hill. It bounded from ledge to ledge and finally breaking, spilled the precious fire water over the hillside.

Further to the west is Angel Hill, named for the family that once owned much of it; and one can wander from point to point all over the countryside finding

curious and interesting local names. At the head of the lake is the "Sleeping Lion," sometimes called Mt. Wellington. Its original name was Mt. Millington, but when George Clarke built Hyde Hall, he found it easy to change "Millington" to "Wellington" in honor of his friend and schoolmate. The extreme southern point of this hill is the "Shad Cam," left by Judge Cooper to the youngest Elizabeth Cooper living in 1850. Alas, she never got it, as long before that date the owner of the adjoining land had pulled down the fence and claimed the point.

The "Shad Cam" was given its name by the Cooper boys of a hundred years ago. Even in those days the lake was infested by lying fishermen. One of them, of Scotch descent, used to boast, as they still do, of the fishing of his youth, and finally, as the climax of the stories of the past, he indicated this point and said, "Why, boys, in those days the shad cam up to that point."

On the old map of the Springfield Patent the "Shad Cam" is indicated as containing eight acres and as belonging to W. Cooper. In Judge Cooper's "List of Lands unsold, commencing Nov. 16th, 1797," is the following entry: "Springfield Pattennt, Nov. 16th Point and Fishing Place in lot No. 32, 8 acres, Value 250.00."

Opposite the five-mile point is the "Dugway" with its history lost. We know the name is a very old one as



in the itemized account kept by Judge Cooper of the cost of the road on the east side of the lake there is an entry of the payment of £68, 5sh. & 6d. for building the "Fifth Mile of the road (The Dugway)." This was in 1790 and on June 18, 1792, it cost 17sh. for "Mending the Dugway." The entire road cost £388, 15sh. & 1d. The State of New York had appropriated £400 for the work and the closed account shows a credit of nearly twelve pounds.

In the Oak Creek Valley a road branches from the main highway just south of Schuyler's Lake; a mile or so up the road, where it forks for Hartwick and Burlington, is Pleasant Valley, innocuous enough in appearance but universally known as "Hell Town." Among the few houses still standing is an interesting field stone farmhouse.

Below Milford, on the east of the Susquehanna is "The Crumhorn," with a forgotten history. Crumhorn Mountain was the home of the rattlesnake fifty years ago, and its beautiful lake, which fills its bowl-like top, was then a great resort for fishermen. To-day it is almost abandoned; the old tavern on the shores of the lake has been turned into a summer residence and is closed, while the farmhouses have been deserted and are falling into ruin.

I doubt if it now has as many residents as it did two days after Christmas in the year 1808, when a contem-

plative farmer, whose name, unfortunately has not survived, comfortably seated by his fireside while the winter winds blew fiercely over the mountain top, wrote the following political diatribe:

After I had done my days work I set down by the fire-side to shave a stick that I had cut for an axe handle, my Wife had put all the Children in bed and was turning over and contriving patches for their Cloths; as she seemed much engaged in her economical plans I did not chuse to disturb her by entering into conversation, my mind was engaged on many subjects it soon however fixed upon politics and the cause of the great stagnation of all kinds of business, they say that *Buonaparte, King George, or some body else* will not let our Vessels sail on the Ocean; of course then we Farmers can have no market for our produce except we take it by Land.

I know of no place we can go to in this way but Canada and this our own Government forbids, but what right has Buonaparte or King George to interfere with us? it is true, I read in the Papers that Buonaparte told the World that they should not trade with King George, and that King George soon after told all those who were afraid to trade with England upon the account of Buonaparte's threat, that they should not trade with France unless they paid him for it, you see by this that he likes Money, the thought struck me that our Rulers ought not to have depended upon the justice of other Nations for the protection of *our rights* for if Mankind were all just and good they would want no rulers, it must then be the fault of our rulers that we are placed in our present situation, or rather our own fault for placing them to rule over us, who to say the *least* it appears are not capable of doing it to our advantage. I finished my

axe handle and an excellent piece of Timber it was, and I thought if we were as careful in looking for rulers as we are in choosing an axe handle we should have better times, to be sure the timber here is not as good as it is *down Country*, (and this inferiority for aught I know may hold good in the animate as well as the inanimate World), but then we have some pretty good Walnut &c., &c., we need not therefore take Witch Hazel or Bass Wood unless we have a mind to do so.

Crum Horn Dec. 27th. 1808.

This is the earliest mention of the name of which I have any knowledge; it throws no light on its origin but shows it to be well over a century old. With many another similar document the above found its way into the possession of Judge Cooper and has long survived the children whose clothes were being patched that December night.

There is laid down on some of the old maps a narrow strip of land marked "Crumhorn Patent." Perhaps one of the patentees was named "Crumhorn."

Above Milford on the same road are "The Jams," so called, I was told years ago by my aunt, Susan Fenimore Cooper, because the hills have the appearance of having been jammed violently together. Down the ravine runs a little stream falling from ridge to ridge.

North of Hannah's Hill, and just west of Fenimore, is Mount Ovis. It was named a little over a century ago, about 1813, by my grandfather, who kept on it

some of the first imported Merino sheep. Among them was a famous ram, Sinbad, which was killed by falling into the well.

Papoose Pool is now little more than a swamp, to the left of the River road just below its junction with the road to Richfield; less than fifty years ago it was a beautiful wooded pool, with the reputation of being bottomless. In fact there was only a few feet of water and limitless mud. It is a quicksand and there are stories of the quite recent loss of a farm team and wagon in its depth. No reason for its name is known to-day.

On the hilltop across the Susquehanna again, and below Phoenix, is Mossy Pond. The reason for its name is apparent. Its location has been for years marked by the Mossy Pond tree, a great tree with a top like an inverted umbrella. It still towers far above its mates although now entirely dead.

Going farther afield; over in the Otego Patent we have "Susie Hole." Who Susie was, we do not know, unless the Hole belonged to Susanna Dilwing who owned a large tract in the Croghan Patent.

Frog Hollow, dear to the youth of fifty years ago, has vanished; it was in the village, to the east of Pioneer Street at the foot of the hill south of the Presbyterian Church. There, as its name suggests, frogs of all sizes and ages could be found and separated from



their hind legs. It was full of cat-tails, too, and of all swamp-growing flowers. It was a most popular playground; just water enough to keep alive frogs and pollywogs and thoroughly to wet the feet of its explorers.

There are two names, not quite local, upon which an old map of 1790 throws an interesting light: "Cobleskill" and "Schenevus." Both names seem to be derived from the streams near the towns; in 1790 one was known as "Cobus Kill," and the other as "Shineva Creek"; the former named for a land owner and the latter apparently the Indian name.

"Twelve Thousand" is a heading in the social column of the local papers which puzzles and amuses many readers. I spent an afternoon trying to find a resident of this village who knew the exact location of the place, what it was and why it was so called. I met with no success and finally started out to hunt it up. After a delightful motor ride and many inquiries along the way I found that an indefinite tract of lonely land, sparsely inhabited and dotted with deserted houses, churches and burying grounds, lying along the heights east of Schuyler's Lake was, for some reason unknown to the inhabitants, called "Twelve Thousand."

The country is beautiful and the views extraordinarily fine but there seems to be little else to recommend it as a place in which to live and work. One elderly resident of whom we asked where "Twelve Thousand"

was, stopped trying to repair a fence long enough to tell us that we were on it, but he couldn't give us any reason for the name. He added that he had just bought the farm which we were on and that he thought he must have had an attack of temporary aberration when he did so. I am afraid next winter will remove any doubt he may have as to his mental condition when he bought his new home.

On my return I looked over the old maps to see if they threw any light on the name and found the explanation on a map of the Subdivision of the Great Croghan or Cooper Patent made about 1770; on it appears an irregular ell-shaped piece of land running down near the east side of Schuyler's Lake and then west across its south end, and some distance below, bearing the inscription "V. P. Dow & Others, 12000 A."

It's a far cry from "Pig Alley" of fifty years ago to "Prospect Place" of to-day, and a more than doubtful improvement in name. Whoever made the change had a grim sense of humor as old Pig Alley running from the back of the brick Miller house at the corner of Lake and Pine streets to Hannah's Hill, had the least of a prospect of any alley, lane, or street in the village. In old times when it climbed the almost inaccessible side of Hannah's Hill to the opening in the woods cut for the view on the hilltop, it was a favorite Sunday after-

noon walk for the girls and boys who were able to escape the weekly stroll to the cemetery and back. From the clearing there was a wonderful view of the lake and its wooded easterly shore.

Along this thickly wooded east shore of the lake were many places which now are little more than names: "Prospect Rock," with its beautiful view, now grown up; "The Seats of the Mighty," on the ledge overlooking the lake just where "John Woods Clearing" began; a clearing made nearly sixty years ago out of spite, because Edward Clark wouldn't pay an exorbitant price for the land after a threat by Wood to clear it and spoil the lake shore. Beyond this clearing is the Chalêt Farm of Fenimore Cooper and Natty Bumppo's Cave, and just beyond its northerly line were the remains of the "Hermit's" House which was abandoned some sixty years ago; only the cellar is left, but when I was a boy the house still stood in its little overgrown clearing. It already had begun to fall down, the floors were unsafe, and the name of the hermit forgotten. Farther north, and just above the Dugway on the hillside was the "Hogs Back" where two ravines came so close together that one could straddle the path, with a foot in each. Until quite recently the finest old pines on the lakeside stood here.



## THE FOUR CORNERS

THERE are other four corners in Cooperstown; many of them; there are also three and two corners, and even one one corner; but it was about "The Four Corners" that the civic and much of the social life of the town centered after the first struggling years of its existence.

The "two corners," opposite the entrance to the Cooper Grounds, claims the distinction of the center of things in earlier days. Near this spot was the old Indian village, as was shown by the existence of apple trees there; here George Croghan built his log home and lived for a few years; when General Clinton came he made his headquarters at this spot and, later, when William Cooper built his first house in Otsego, he selected this place, and the house stood where the gates to the Cooper Grounds are now, looking up Otsego Lake, while on the corners opposite were William Cooper's garden on the west and Andrew Craig's on the east. These gardens went through to Lake Street and ran east and west nearly three hundred feet. For a short time Andrew Craig was a partner in the settlement. He soon, however, sold out his interest to Cooper. It is probable, too, that Hartwick made his attempted

settlement here in 1762 or 63, before Croghan's time. The explanation of the popularity of the spot probably is that from the time of the Indians there was some kind of a clearing here; it was high land near the water and above all fairly well hidden from the lake and the river.

When the original village was laid out, in 1788, the westerly line ran north and south through the Four Corners where Main and Pioneer streets now intersect one another. These streets were then known as Second and West streets. It was really the westerly line of civilization. All traffic came from the east in those days, and so when the Red Lion Inn was built, on the southwest corner, it closed over half of the present Main Street, leaving only a narrow road running out into the wilderness. Over this trail went many of the settlers of places west of us. As the village grew, buildings lined this road and it became a narrowed Main Street, and so remained until the great fire of 1862 destroyed them and the present street was laid out the full width of old Main Street.

The Red Lion marked the dawn of the glory of the Four Corners. From its vantage point, across Main Street, it filled the eye of the approaching traveler. Its first sign is said to have been painted by R. R. Smith, a merchant from Philadelphia, and the first Sheriff of Otsego County. Opposite, on the southeast corner, the jail was built, and over it, entered by an

outside flight of steps on Main Street, was the Court Room. On the west side of West Street, opposite the jail, were the stocks and the whipping post. It is more than probable that where the youth of the village now gather to drink soda water the youth of those times gathered to throw vegetables at the unfortunate occupants of the stocks.

Farther west, on the hillside by the present jail, the gallows stood, when needed. Thus all the implements of Justice were gathered about the Four Corners; and this notwithstanding Judge Cooper's gibe when the question of a county seat was first agitated: "The Court House for Cooperstown, the jail for Newtown-Martin (Middlefield) and the gallows for Cherry Valley." "The Heart of Midlothian" was only a jail; the heart of Cooperstown was encircled by all the insignia of justice and punishment, good cheer and death.

Near, if not on the northeast corner, was the Blue Anchor—the rival of the Red Lion—frequented by the more sedate residents and kept by a retired sea captain.

Where the flag pole stands now, the liberty pole used to stand and here public meetings were held and political speakers declaimed.

The location should be dear especially to the learned professions; the Court House to the lawyers, the jail to the ministers, and the stocks to the doctors. For

here, from the steps of the jail, the first regular preaching was done by Rev. John MacDonald (Scotch Seceder), who was in jail for debt and on the limits by grace of a friend who bailed him; and one of the first occupants of the stocks was Dr. Charles Powers who so far forgot himself as to put an emetic in the punch supplied at a ball at the Red Lion, to which he had not been invited. He confessed, but was not forgiven, was put in the stocks, and afterwards banished.

It must have been a very sick, or a very hard-hearted, crowd of young people who could resist Powers's appeal for mercy, written with a "trembling hand," if not with a "penitent heart," and still existing. It reads as follows:

Worthy & much Injured Gentlemen & Ladies  
From the Bottom of my Heart I sincerely regret my Presumptuous, Unhappy & Ungrateful Conduct towards you on the Evening of the 4th of Instant October—Gentlemen & Ladies will you do me the honour to believe me when I say that the Tart-Emetic I put into your Liquor was owing partly to Intoxication and partly to the Insinuation of the adversary of Men. It was not done from any Pique or Prejudice I had against the Company, for I acknowledge you are a Company of very Modest Respectable young Gentlemen and Ladies. I declare before God and his Holy Angels that what I did was done to have a little Sport and from no other Motive. I declare as solemnly that I had no Intention of Injuring the Health of any person, for had I wanted that I could have put in the Solution of Corrosive Sublimate, which is the strongest preparation of Mercury



which would have acted as a slow but certain Poison. Or I might have put in Liquid Laudanum, a Preparation of Opium, to such Quantity that it would have thrown you all into a profound sleep from which 'tis not probable all of you would have awaked both: of which Medicines are much cheaper than the Tart Emetic. It is needless Gentlemen & Ladies for me to be more particular.

I now humbly ask the forgiveness of God, Angels & Men for my foolish conduct and hope and pray I may never be left to Conduct in such a Manner again. Gentlemen & Ladies, I ask the forgiveness of you all, and am willing to make all the retractation I am able to.

And now, Gentlemen & Ladies, will you please to show so much of the forgiving Temper of the Saviour of Men as to forgive me and by thus doing you will lay me under the highest Obligations to study Gratitude to you so long as God shall spare my life.

This from the penitent Heart and trembling hand  
of CHARLES POWERS

Cooperstown

Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> 1791

Messrs. Joseph Griffin, Carr, White, Meachem &c &c.

Messrs. Griffin, Carr, &c. &c.

An upset stomach surely dulls the sense of humor, as well as the spirit of forgiveness and the appreciation of great dangers escaped. I have no doubt that to many of the revelers the idea of the sleep without a wakening which might have followed the use of opium was not at the time wholly disagreeable.

The letter opens a new vision of the Four Corners on that October night, a hundred and thirty years ago;

the Adversary of Men, whispering in the ear of the country doctor to use opium as cheaper than Tart-Emetic; and had he yielded to the tempter, the Red Lion turned into a silent palace of sleeping beauties and frontier gallants.

The political activities of the town centered at the Four Corners for years; public meetings were held there or in the adjoining tavern or nearby "Washington Hall." At one of these meetings, held about 1808, the following resolution was adopted; slightly changed, it almost would have done for a meeting held a few years ago, with its reference to the "Liberty of the Seas" and to trusting our natural defense to "Gun Boats, Proclamations, and Armies on Paper."

Peace, and no Embargo Nomination,  
here take in the proceedings of the Meeting.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

Since the most gloomy period of our Revolution the Liberty of our Country has not been in a more critical situation. The Emperor of France began his political career by singing hosannas to the goddess of Liberty, he now rules the Continent of Europe at the point of the Bayonet; all Nations within his reach have by his intrigues and his Arms been subjected to his control: in pursuance of his plan of universal dominion but under the specious pretext of giving of the World the Liberty of the Seas, he issues decrees in direct violation of the Law of Nations and of his solemn Treaty with this Republic: *in conformity with his policy if not in obedience to his mandates* shall we then fellow Citizens

by our nonintercourse and embargo Laws assist him in obtaining the dominion of the Ocean? the only barrier between him and universal Empire—shall we continue men in office who conduct the affairs of the Nation in secret conclave?—who pursue measures which will inevitably bring our common Country to poverty and ruin?—who will not or cannot let us know the true cause of these measures—who say we are upon the eve of a War and commit our defence to Gun Boats, Proclamations and Armies on Paper—if not arouse honest Yeomanry of our Country with you under divine providence rests the Salvation of this Nation, if you are not now vigilant and at your posts we are undone—we must become a Nation of Slaves—arouse then before it is too late and change your Rulers—a change we conceive is absolutely necessary, the Candidates above nominated are *honest Men* possessed of talents and information and who are not prejudiced in favour of any foreign Nation, they are *American born* and follow the precepts of the immortal Washington—our forefathers fought and bled and left us a precious Inheritance—*Civil & Religious Liberty*—let it not depreciate in our hands but be *transmitted to Posterity* as pure as we received it.

BENJAMIN GILBERT Chairman

PETER MAYHEW CLARK

It was here, without a doubt, that on July 4th, 1794, the author read to a patriotic and appreciative audience:

#### AN HYMN

Parent of nations! guardian pow'r!  
 The source of ev'ry good!  
 Accept the homage of this hour,  
 Devote to gratitude.



Well may the song aspire to thee,  
When freedom is the theme,  
Whose service leaves the subject free  
In monarchy supreme.

O may the nations learn of thee  
To rule and to obey;  
Thou giv'st the subjects noblest plea,  
Thy laws the mildest sway.

How sweet the meeting of thy care!  
How gracious each behest!  
"Come ye, who faint and wearied are,  
And I will give you rest."

Has not enough of tyrant sway  
Despoil'd the subject's peace?  
Bid him to freedom seek the way,  
Ah, bid oppression cease.

Nor wanting be thy guiding hand  
To point th' important aim;  
May ne'er mad License rule the land  
With Liberty's fair name.

And O! by thy peculiar care,  
Columbia's guardian chief!  
Long to her wonted int'rests spare  
His labours and his life.

May wisdom in our counsils reign,  
And union bind our hearts;  
Faction attempt her wiles in vain,  
Defeated in her arts.

Forbid that freedom's sacred fire,  
Thus lighted on our shore,  
Should with abated flame aspire,  
Or ever slumber more.

May firm allegiance e'er await  
Protection's mutual arm;  
This scorning pow'r unduly great,  
That free from false alarm.

July 4th, 1794.

It is written on a double sheet of letter paper, yellow with age, but is, unfortunately, unsigned. The handwriting is that of Richard Fenimore Cooper, the eldest child of Judge Cooper, then in his nineteenth year. The wilderness seems to have turned men's thoughts to poetry.

Between the Red Lion and the jail took place a famous wrestling match; Judge Cooper offered a lot of 150 acres to any man on the settlement who could throw him. He was finally thrown and the lot conveyed to his conqueror. It was here, too, that as he was leaving the Court House after holding a term of Court, he was attacked by James Cochrane, a successful political rival. There are still in existence affidavits of onlookers declaring that Judge Cooper won the bout. The cause of the attack is said to have been a remark by Judge Cooper that Cochrane had "fiddled his way into Con-

gress." It seems that while campaigning he fiddled for the young to dance evenings.

Just west of the Corners was the field where the Militia paraded and was drilled when the martial spirit of the town was aroused before the War of 1812; and doubtless it was the good cheer of the Red Lion, too liberally partaken of by the weary fighters, which inspired an unknown poet, probably an envious tax-paying civilian, to write these verses:

The Country rings around with loud arlarms,  
And raw in fields the rude Militia swarms;  
Mouths without hands; maintain'd at vast expense;  
In peace a Charge, in war a weak deffence;  
Stout once a Month they march a blustering band,  
And ever, but in times of need, at hand.  
This was the morn when, issuing on the guard,  
Drawn up in rank and file they stood prepared  
Of seeming arms to make a short essay,  
Then hasten to be drunk, the business of the Day.  
The Cowards would have fled, but that they knew,  
Themselves so many, and their foes so few;—

The local organization was a "Troop of Light Dragoons attached to Brig. General Henry McNeil's Brigade." At one time the troop had seventy members in all. Isaac Cooper and Jerome Clark were Lieutenants and at different times in command.

The following receipt gives the name of the Command-

ing Officer in 1808 and a partial list of the property of the troop:

Capt. Van Deer Veer purchased the	
Colors without painting.....	\$ 7.00
Trumpet.....	10.—
One half Clarinet.....	7.—

French Horn belongs to  
the Company—given by

RICHARD F. COOPER

The above articles I give to Isaac Cooper.  
Cooperstown Jan. 4th, 1808.

FERD. VANDERVEER.

A surviving inventory shows that there were three pair of spurs among the seventy horsemen.

As the town grew, the character of the Four Corners changed,—the Post Office settled near it and the local printing and newspaper office. In the latter Thurlow Weed worked in his younger days. A short distance away was the home of Judge Nelson and opposite the house and office of Dr. Fuller. In time the Red Lion retired and the "Eagle" tavern took its place until swept away by the fire of 1862; logically the Phoenix should have succeeded, but instead came business houses.

The town became beautiful with age; Main Street was lined with great overhanging trees and the sidewalks were broad and covered with pine planks.

When the roads improved, the stages came and went



from the Four Corners, and the youth of the town, and always some of its elders, gathered at the Corners to meet the coming guest or "get the mail"; all eyes watched the western approach to see the stage swing into Main Street and come, with its four galloping horses, down to the Post Office. At first it came from Fort Plain twenty-six miles away, and later from Colliers—seventeen—a long and weary ride as the writer remembers it.

The Four Corners has had its share in the military glory of the town; past this point doubtless the silent red warriors of the Indian town went to join their tribesmen in the raids which made the Iroquois the most dreaded of all the Indian nations; from it the youth of the village went forth to the wars of 1812 and 1861,—some of them never to return.

In 1917 again the village furnished its splendid quota of volunteers not "too proud to fight," when all that was best of its youth answered the call to arms; many of them to give their health or their lives in the camps and on the battlefields of France.

It was a fine tribute to the fame of our village which Gabriel Hanotaux paid it when in announcing the entry of the United States into the World War, he declared, "The spirit of Leatherstocking still lives in the American people," for the spirit of Leatherstocking surely haunts the happy hunting grounds of the woods and lake of Otsego.



## GHOSTS—OURS AND OTHERS

It is not true, as some think, that ghosts walk only in the South. Our northern land has its "hants." Doubtless many a ghost welcomes the chance to walk in a cool climate, and perhaps this explains why hardly a house in Scotland is without at least one ghostly visitant.

Be this as it may, north of us, at Ticonderoga, we have the ghost of the Indian maiden which used to be seen on the southern rampart, and which, with a scream, throws itself over to escape the pursuing officer.

It was near this old fort, too, that the great ghost story of Duncan Campbell of Inverawe staged its last scene, when, on the eve of the battle in which he was killed, Campbell met on the bridge the wraith of his murdered kinsman, who, years before in the tower at Inverawe, had bade him good-bye until "We shall meet at Ticonderoga."

Our local ghosts are less thrilling, but just as dear to us and just as good "hants." Curiously the ghosts of our village cling to the old part of the town. Perhaps they are stopped there by the river on their way east, for ghosts, like witches, cannot cross water.

The oldest of them is the Indian chief who for nearly a century and a half is known to have sat behind the old stone wall on River Street, and with his sturdy, if bony legs, many a time kicked it down. For five generations, from father to son, has the tradition been handed down, how, back of this wall, with chin on knees and hands clasped around shin bones sat, amidst his weapons and scanty pots and pipes, the skeleton of a great Mohawk Chief.

Well I remember the terrors of the spot on dark and rainy nights. I suppose because he was an Indian was the reason why one's scalp had that queer feeling and the scalp lock seemed to rise and pull! I never heard that he was seen to leave his grave, but I was told, as have been all the family, that no wall ever had stood, or ever would stand, at that place. It was the despair of successive owners, wall after wall was built and kicked down, until the present heavy one was put up, thick and strong enough, it was hoped, to withstand the feet of the old chief; but even it is yielding, as all may see. When its predecessor fell, in my youth, there, glaring at the fallen wall, sat the triumphant old chief, with bony chin on knees, cavernous eyes, and skinny legs; there he was left; and there he sits to-day.

Ghosts must love company for another has been seen in the old stone house on the corner below. The house was built by Judge Cooper for his daughter Anne, when

she married George Pomeroy, well over a century ago. There she lived for many years and grew old. She was a little woman, and a determined one, and, tradition says, prided herself on her knowledge of how to bring up children. She put this knowledge to the test as is shown by the long and pathetic line of little Pomeroy's, with their little headstones in the Cooper lot in Christ Churchyard.

In time came shrinking fortunes until finally the little old woman reluctantly left the old house—but not for good. It passed into strange hands; but after years returned to the family, and evidently old Anne Pomeroy returned to it once more. It was only occupied by the living for short periods and at long intervals.

On a November night, during one of these intervals, a friend of mine was expecting a guest by the evening train. The train came, but the guest didn't arrive at his host's, which was but a block from the old stone house. Finally he came, and explained the delay, by saying that he had been lost and would hardly have found his way had it not been for the nice old lady in the stone house on the corner below. The host, with true hospitality, said nothing until the visitor had been dried and warmed and fed, when by the fireside with their pipes, he asked about the old lady. His guest said that, after wandering about in the rain and failing to find his host's, he went to an old stone house on

the corner, which seemed to be closed, but on knocking repeatedly with the heavy knocker the door was opened by a little old lady in black with a candle in her hand who said, in answer to his inquiry if "B" lived there, "No, he lives in the house on the corresponding corner below"; and he added, "Here I found you." Nothing could convince the stranger that the house was and had for a long time been unoccupied. So after arguing as only smoking clergy can, they agreed to settle the dispute by going to the house. The visitor led the way to the stone house. He admitted that it did look unoccupied and, after long and lusty knocking, which brought no lady, old or young, to the door, he declared himself puzzled, but still convinced that even the ghosts of Cooperstown would help a stranger. As both the living participants of this tale were clergymen its truth cannot be questioned. Then, too, passing glimpses of the old lady's face at the window have been caught from time to time.

The other River Street ghost is even more distinctly a Cooper wraith, and it, too, clings to the neighborhood of the old Indian:

The last of the older generation of occupants of Byberry Cottage died on a Good Friday, some years ago; she had been an invalid for years, was blind and had but one leg. She lived in a wheeled chair and her nurse pushed the chair to Christ Church for service



when the weather was good and her patient strong enough for the trip. During service on the day of her death, a Good Friday, a member of the congregation, who had the faculty which the Scotch call "second sight," was amazed to see the wheeled chair with its invalid occupant move past her up the middle aisle of the church. Noiselessly and slowly it went; but no one was pushing it. It seemed to move of its own volition. Usually it was turned when it reached the transepts and stood at one side during the service, but, on this Good Friday, it moved solemnly up through the choir and seemed to vanish in the altar itself. Immediately the one who saw the vision spoke of it. After service was over, it was announced that the invalid had died, shortly before.

She was most devout and her greatest treat was to attend service in the church she loved. About Byberry Cottage, her home, cling many stories of its original occupants. One of them, Susan Fenimore Cooper, is still remembered as a saint. She gave her life, and most of her small fortune, to good works. It was she who founded the Hospital, the Orphanage, and the Home for Old Women, and, by her efforts kept them alive during the years of their struggling youth. She was very deaf and slight, but had what is now recognized as great psychic power. It was then called animal magnetism. She always had this mysterious



something and far back in the last century experimented with it at the Old Hall.

Her power was most extraordinary and, for her friends and relatives, she would exercise it at any time. No material thing was too heavy for her to move. She frequently, as a demonstration of this, would move an inverted dining-table with a heavy man seated on a pile of books on it. The heaviest man in town, old Judge Sturgis, once took this strange ride.

She was deeply religious and finally, a few years before her death and after an evening of experiments, she heard strange sounds and thought that they and the spirits which she thought filled her room had come to warn her that the gift was of the devil. She refused ever again to exercise it and a great opportunity for scientific study was lost.

There is the recollection of another shadowy visitor, which used to be seen in the old house which formerly stood opposite the Indian's grave. Well I remember, when sent there as a mere child to see the grown-up daughter of my dead uncle, Richard Cooper, seating myself with all the embarrassment of such an occasion, in his library chair, only to be told, with great excitement, not to sit in it as uncle Richard was occupying it! Truly a nerve-racking experience for a child and one which greatly enhanced the terrors of River Street.

There were in my youth other ghosts, more nebulous,

which haunted certain houses; one of them was down on the river road, but it has been exorcised; another, on the lake road, was closely allied to a sad tragedy of love and death. This one too has been laid, and as neither are family possessions and some tenants are so unreasonable as not to appreciate rented or purchased ghosts, I pass them by.

One other ghost there is, a connection, if not a relative, and it I knew first hand. The story goes back well over a century to the earlier days of the settlement. One of the Coopers married a noted beauty of her day, whose family had come from Virginia to settle on the extreme northern portion of the so-called Cooper Patent. There are portraits of her still hanging on the walls of her one-time homes. They show a very handsome, but rather hard and proud woman, evidently of great will power. After a married life of several years her first husband died, in 1813, at the age of thirty-seven. There had been much scandal about her husband's friend who owned and occupied a great adjoining estate. The talk was not allayed when, immediately after the funeral, the widow, Ann, went with her admirer to his home. She afterward told my father, a great favorite of hers, that she was married immediately—but this has to do with a State-wide scandal of those days and not with ghosts.

She had in time a son; and then a second son, who on

his father's death, took possession of the great house on the estate and married another celebrated beauty and brought her to his home. I doubt if any house is large enough for an ex-beauty of advanced years, and doubtless bad temper, and a reigning beauty, in the glory of her youth.

Whatever the cause may have been, Ann was invited to leave and find herself a home elsewhere. This she did reluctantly, and moved into her father's house a few miles away. As she left, while the young people stood at the entrance and the horses waited, she turned and with lifted hand cursed the house she loved. "You may drive me out now, but I shall return and haunt it forever"—were her parting words, as told to me by my father, and the tale runs,—unauthenticated, however,—that she added: "May no woman ever be happy in it again."

Tradition says that it had been a gay and somewhat wild life which had been lived there, and my mother has told me of the desperate gaming indulged in and how one of my great uncles, the builder and owner of "Woodside," after losing all his other property finally staked and lost his house.

Years passed; the great house was almost abandoned. Occupied in part only and for brief periods it fell into decay and became a wonderful home for "hants." Its fame as a haunted house spread through the countryside

and even reached England. Again the heir married, and again the bride was a great beauty and a most gracious woman; the house was once more occupied and gradually restored; children's voices resounded through its halls and great rooms and it saw a delightful social life.

Knowing it and its owners from my youth, I was a frequent visitor for nearly half a century. Some thirty years ago I was one of a November house party composed, with one other exception, of members of the host's family.

The available rooms, for the house as yet had not all been restored, were not over many and so when bedtime came, I found myself in a room far down one of the corridors which opened on the central court about which the house was built. My windows looked out on the dripping wooded mountainside. By the light of my candle I saw that the room was one of those not yet restored; the paper in places hung in strips from the wall; the big mirror between the windows was without much of the silver backing; the bare floor was uneven and a bit loose in spots. The door was at the end of one side and didn't fasten. At the other end of the room was the single bed and beside it, balancing the door, a great old-fashioned wardrobe, which with a dressing-table and a chair were all the furniture.

After a look about I got into bed with the candle on



the chair beside me, and fell asleep, having no fear at least of family ghosts. One keeps no track of time while sleeping, but I suddenly found myself wide awake, with every sense on the alert and that mysterious feeling, which most of us have had at times, that there was someone in the room. It was dark as the plague of Egypt and only the dripping trees and sighing wind could be heard, when, after I know not how long, I heard a slow footstep as of someone approaching from the corner of the room opposite the door. Slowly, deliberately, it came over the bare and creaking floor, toward the bed; again I noticed that queer sensation about my scalp lock which, as a boy, I felt when passing the grave of the Indian chief late at night. Flat on my back I lay, motionless, more anxious to escape attention than to see who my visitor was, and dreading what the light of my candle might show.

On came that awful, deliberate footstep toward the left of my bed, where the great wardrobe was, until finally, after years, it was beside the lower part of the bed. Then, as I lay motionless and expectant, slowly the bed clothes were drawn across my body, not as if pulled by a hand, but as if someone in passing too close to the bed had brushed against them and drawn them slowly off.

Then silence in the room. I leaped from the other side of the bed and lighted my candle. The room was



empty, and so was the wardrobe. The door was closed, and the bed clothes, drawn from the foot, were partially on the floor and partially on the bedside.

Realizing that ghosts rarely come but once in a night, I got back into bed and fell asleep. Next day, I said nothing of my disturbed night until evening when we were all gathered about the fire in the dim old book-lined library. An English relative of the owner of the house, who was himself absent, remarked that it was known in England as haunted. This, of course, brought up the question of its ghosts for discussion and the widow of the last owner said, "Of course it's haunted," and told what she had seen and heard. One tale led to another until I turned to my hostess, a life-long friend and distant relative, and said, "M——, I have often heard of the ghosts of this place but never until last night did I see one." Then I told my story, laughingly. I noticed my hostess looked serious and after a time suggested that if I would go with her through the long dark corridors and rooms she would get some cider; adding that all the talk of ghosts had made her a bit nervous.

Hardly had the library door closed behind us when she turned to me and said, "J——, is that true?" I assured her that it was absolutely; then she said, "It's strange, that is the haunted room, we never use it, but the house is crowded and I knew you best and knew

that you were familiar with the house and so put you there; it was old G——'s dressing-room and my last nurse and A—— (her daughter) both declare that one evening they saw the figure of an old man in a yellow, red, and green wrapper go down the corridor ahead of them and turn into that room; they insisted on it and I sent the nurse away. Such a wrapper we have packed in the attic; it belonged to old G——."

Well, the cider helped a little, but I didn't look forward to more nights in that room with anticipations of joy. I did my best to keep the party amused and make them forget bedtime, with fair success, but the unavoidable hour came and again I found myself alone with my candle; again my night was disturbed, but this time in a semi-comic manner and only indirectly by ghosts, so let that story go until another time.

Many are the other tales of the old house told by its inmates; one tells how, in the dead of night, the piano in the vast drawing-room plays tirelessly; another of the underground passageway, from the closet under the winding stairs to the family vault, through which the dead passed back and forth, safe from exposure to the weather. I remember often seeing the black opening of the passageway, in the little closet, but have heard that some more venturesome soul crawled into it only to find it blocked against him after a short distance.

In old times when a member of the family died,

he didn't go far from the house to find a new resting place. Hardly more than a stone's throw from the front door is the family vault, built in the hillside where it falls to the lake; it is a commodious resting place for the dead. Years ago it was open to living and dead alike; the doors at either end of the passageway leading back into the hillside were unlocked and often open, and access to the vault itself, which lay deep in the ground, at right angles to the entrance, required only courage and curiosity. In it lay, under stone sarcophagi, the builder and some of his family, while on the floor was the exposed coffin of one of the dead occupants. In those days it was the test of courage to go down into the vault, at midnight, with a candle only as light. I remember one youth who made the trip and failing to return promptly, we all went to look for him, and found him seated on the exposed and cracked coffin, smoking, while to add to his comfort and the cheerfulness of the occasion, he had built, with chips from the coffin, a small fire in the center of the vault.

When the builder of the old house died, his bedroom and dressing-room, on the first floor, were closed, just as he left them. In time the floors gradually settled, the furniture moved toward the center, and finally everything went through into the cellar. We often opened the door to look at the collapsed floor with the

carpet hanging on the broken beams and the furniture piled in the cellar. We used the drawing-room for hand ball and racquette, and the proprietor often used the entrance hall to store extra carriages in. The house was always full of interest and excitement for the young, with its air of mystery, its great size and beauty. One of our greatest architects, Stanford White, said of it, that it was the most beautiful country house in America.

It had in those days too another attraction at least for boys; it was overrun by small snakes, brown with a golden collar. One met them everywhere in the corridors and rooms, and low boards were slipped in the bedroom doors to keep out those which wandered about the long halls. I remember once that a stranger who was talking with me in the library suddenly became silent and a look of terror spread over his face, I followed the direction of this fixed stare and saw curled under a desk, one of the larger of the snakes with head erect.

As to my ghostly visitant the only question is of identity: Whose wraith was it? I like to think that it was old Ann's, come to prove to me that she was keeping the oath which she swore so solemnly, when nearly a century before she was ordered from her home, and of which she knew my father had told me.

There is a vision sometimes seen from the hillside where Fynmere now stands; in the golden haze of



the October late afternoons, when our beautiful valley glows softly with yellows and reds, may be seen a row of horsemen, riding slowly up the road. There is a space in their ranks, now between the third and the fourth, and those of us who see them know for whom the space is kept by the silent riders.

#### SOME OTHER GHOSTS

There are other ghosts that I have known besides the Cooperstown ones; two are especially interesting, one I saw and the other I heard about very directly.

Years ago, in the old Elk Street house, I awoke to find a woman standing by my bedside, about halfway between the head and the foot. She was looking down on me intently. I always slept, in those days, with my door open so as to hear if anything happened in the house. Opposite one of my windows, which had no blinds or shutters, was an old-fashioned electric street light which thoroughly illuminated my room.

I was a very light sleeper. On this occasion a feeling that something was in the room awakened me and I turned over; I had been lying with my face to the wall, and there was a woman, close to the bed, looking down on me.

She was so real that I thought at once that it was my mother and spoke to her, saying, "Mother, what do



you want?" There was no reply and no motion; still I thought it human and concluded it must be one of my sisters walking in her sleep, so rising on my elbow I grabbed at the figure to wake her up. Although I seemed to reach it I felt nothing, so reaching farther forward I made a long swing with my arm, but again caught nothing; then I realized that my arm and hand had passed through the figure. It still stood motionless gazing down on my face. I fell back on the bed with a gasp, and after returning the stare for a few seconds, for the first time noticing that I could see the heavy lines of a closet through the form, closed my eyes, and when I opened them again, it was gone.

Still half convinced that it was a sleepwalker I jumped from bed and hurried out into the hall to overtake it or find who it was; no one was there, and on going to the different rooms I found all the family safely in bed.

Puzzled, I went back to my room and got into bed, then I noticed that the dark lines of the closet back of where the figure had been, and which I had seen through it, indicated that it had stood much higher than the ordinary human form.

The other ghost is one of the kind now explained by men of science on the theory of telepathy.

There were in Albany some years ago two men, of approximately the same age, one a sculptor and the other a painter. They were unlike in all except age

and dignity of appearance. The sculptor, P——, was perhaps the greatest of his time in the country, prosperous, honored, and exceedingly handsome. He was very tall with a ruddy complexion and wonderful white hair and beard. The painter, T——, while loving his art, was unsuccessful. All his life he had struggled to accomplish what his friend had won easily; but failed. He was a smaller and a dark man. Almost every day for years they met in the local art store, and in its gallery talked over many things and criticized the pictures. I knew them well, especially P——, who came from Otsego County. Quite frequently I stopped in and talked with them.

Finally a morning came when P—— was not there. T—— waited; and came again; but P—— never returned to the gallery, and, after a few days, T—— also disappeared. He lived in the country some miles below Albany.

About the time of their usual meeting one morning, the news came that P—— had died at nine o'clock. The proprietor of the store took a horse and wagon and drove to T——'s house to tell him of his friend's death. Poor T—— was lying ill on his bed and when he saw the art dealer come into the room, he said, "I know what you have come for, P—— is dead. He died at nine o'clock this morning." The dealer, surprised that anyone should have hurried out to break the news,

answered: "Who told you?" T—— replied: "He did; at nine o'clock this morning, he came into the room and stood by my bed, where you do now, and said to me: 'T——, I'm going; I have come to say good-bye to you.'"

This was told to me at the time by the art dealer. T—— lingered for a while and then joined his more successful friend.

There is at Cooperstown another house with its ghostly visitant, unless recently exorcised. It is the oldest brick house in the village where, years ago, the owner smothered his wife with a pillow, and where, when conditions are right, muffled screams and groans were frequently heard.

I may have forgotten some of my genial ghost friends; if so, I ask their forgiveness, and trust that they will quietly ignore the oversight.

Of course there are the Witch Trees, but they are for the children rather than the grown-ups. Here and there one sees them—tall and lanky; and always pressing toward the east. They look like skinny old women, bent with age and the constant endeavor to drag their heavy feet eastward. For years I have watched one, but as yet have not seen it make any progress. Perhaps they are doomed to hopeless and endless endeavor as a punishment for some crime when they were living women.

Clinging to some of the houses and localities are stories of other things than ghosts which will bear repeating here; as the tale of the Wandering Jew and the stories of the gay revelers whose wraiths must still frequent some of the older houses.

There was great religious toleration in these frontier settlements. It has been said truthfully, that in the colony of New York no one ever was persecuted for his religious belief. Here, at Cooperstown, all denominations lived in harmony and worshiped together for a time—and then were buried in the same graveyard.

For years in the northwest corner of the Presbyterian burying ground lay a Jew. His stone bore an inscription in Hebrew and the date of his death was given in the Hebraic Chronology. Who he was, when he was buried, and why he selected the coldest corner of the blue Presbyterian churchyard to rest in no one knew. Nothing is known about him. For a century he lay in his neglected grave, visited occasionally by a curious resident or an inquisitive stranger in search of the famous epitaph:

“Lord she is *thin*,<sup>1</sup> and not our own  
Thou has not done us wrong  
We thank the for the precious loan  
Afforded us so long.”

<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, “Susannah the wife of Mr Perez Ensign who died July 18<sup>th</sup> 1825” was very thin.



His presence among the Presbyterians always excited wonder and the inscription the interest of tourist and resident alike. One morning his grave stone was missed and all evidence of his long rest in the burying ground had vanished; a careful search was made but not a trace of it could be found and to this day the mystery of its disappearance has never been explained—unless he was the Wandering Jew, and after resting his allotted period in our graveyard picked up his stone and started on his restless way.

The contrasts of life are great; from the graveyard we go to the country house of a century ago; about the time when the Jew appeared in the churchyard, three families arrived from the Bahama Islands and settled on land along the Susquehanna, south of the village. They each built a large and fine colonial house. Years later one of these was destroyed by fire and one was abandoned and is now a mere shell which a few more winters will level with the ground, but the third still stands looking across the valley, with its classical portico. It is practically as it was a century ago—dignified and beautiful.

The builder, tradition says, ran away with his employer's daughter and they built their new home here. She was a large woman and lazy, and disliked the effort of climbing stairs, so the house was built almost entirely on one floor; only a rudimentary second floor



with rooms for servants. The lower floor was most spacious. The builders were rich and gay; life was one long round of riding, gaming, dancing, and drinking, in which young and old from the village, two miles away, joined with the nearer neighbors.

The present owner, who has lived in the house for over sixty years, relates many anecdotes of its early history; the guests generally arrived on horseback, or in sleighs, among them many a man who was, or became, famous throughout the country. The stakes were high and the gayety fast and furious; fortunes changed hands in that innocent-looking colonial house. The hostess who grew larger and slow of movement sat in the big drawing-room and, that nothing might escape her attention, had a window cut through into one of the two dining-rooms where cards were played and from which a stairway led to the wine cellar. From this vantage point she kept track of the game and the wine; she was no spoil sport, however, and left the gamesters unmolested till far on toward dawn there was mounting of horses and gay winner and sad loser galloped away.

## A GRAVEYARD ROMANCE—A TRAGEDY AND A SCANDAL

NEAR the easterly line of the Cooper burying ground are two graves, side by side, one of Hannah Cooper and the other of Col. Richard Cary.

The visitor in reaching them must be careful not to fall over either Mr. or Mrs. Avery Averell or over one of the long row of little Pomeroy's. The Averys are strangers to the people among whom they rest, and why they lie where they do, no one to-day knows; so is Col. Richard Cary, one time on General Washington's staff, but the reason of his presence is known.

For years the tomb of Hannah Cooper bore only the verses engraved on it, and written by her father, Judge Cooper. The name and date were added later. Hannah was his favorite daughter; she was, according to tradition and contemporary writings, talented, beautiful, and good. She lived with her father when he attended the Sessions of Congress at Philadelphia and made many friends and had many admirers.

In the autumn of the year 1800, she, with one of her brothers, either William or Richard, started from her home to visit the Morris family at Butternuts. The

ride was about twenty-four miles over hill and dale, and almost entirely through the woods. As about the only way of travel in the wilderness was on horseback she was an expert horsewoman, but when her horse was brought out and proved to be a thoroughbred, recently imported by her father, she expressed some reluctance to ride him. Of course her brothers twitted her with timidity and she yielded and rode off.

All went well until they were approaching the Morris place. Perhaps the long ride had tired her or made her careless. The horse shied violently, it is said at a dog, threw her by the roadside, and broke her neck. The spot is still marked by a shaft of marble, three sides of which are devoted to her virtues.

This monument was sent all the way from Philadelphia and was the tribute of an admirer. In the lapse of time his name was forgotten and I have heard this post-mortem attention attributed to a number of Hannah's friends, among them Moss Kent, but the letters which are set out in another article in this volume show that the monument was sent by J. H. Imlay of Allentown, N. J., by whom, I think, the inscription on the south face was written; those on the other sides were the work one of a Mrs. Meredith and the other of a Miss Wistar, both of Philadelphia; the monument, a monolith, is, notwithstanding its one hundred and twenty years, in a condition of perfect preservation.

The inscriptions which it bears I have set out at length with the letters relating to it.

Her brother turned about and rode back to Coopers-town, bringing the news of the accident. On his arrival Judge Cooper and Moss Kent, a great admirer of Hannah's, and some of the family mounted and started at once for Morris. It was late; the moon was full and the country ablaze with autumn colors. My father has often repeated to me the story of that long and silent ride as told to him by his father, to whom it had been related by Moss Kent.

Poor Hannah! She was brought back to her home, and laid temporarily on the old Queen Anne table now in the dining-room at Fynmere, which had been brought from Richard Fenimore's home in Rancocus, New Jersey, and subsequently became the library table at Otsego Hall.

In due time she was buried under the stone bearing these verses by her heart-broken father:

Adieu! thou Gentle, Pious, Spotless, Fair,  
Thou more than daughter of my fondest care,  
Farewell! Farewell! till happier ages roll  
And waft me Purer to thy kindred Soul.  
Oft shall the Orphan and the Widow'd poor  
Thy bounty fed, this lonely spot explore,  
There to relate thy seeming hapless doom,  
(More than the solemn record of the tomb,



By tender love inscribed can e'er portray,  
Nor sculptured Marble, nor the Plaintiff lay,  
Proclaim thy Virtues thro' the vale of time)  
And bathe with grateful tears thy hallowed shrine.

Among her elderly admirers was Col. Richard Cary, the father of the Ann Cary who married Richard Cooper and later George Clarke. When the gallant Virginia Colonel came to die, he whispered to his mourning family that he had one last request to make—"Bury me beside Hannah Cooper; she was the best woman I ever knew and my only chance of Paradise is getting in on her skirts."

This may have been a shock to his wife and family but they respected his wish and buried him where he still lies—close beside Hannah. Whether or not he accomplished his purpose only Eternity can tell the reader.

Here the romance ends—but among the books which have survived the vicissitudes of over a century and a quarter of attic life, is a rather large calfskin-covered volume inscribed "Miss Coopers Commonplace Book." It is dated 1791 and on the flyleaf is written "Miss H. Cooper, Cooperstown."

Nearly three hundred pages are filled with poetry and prose copied or written with great care by the owner, and which by their character show the turn of mind of Hannah from early youth until her death. Then fol-

lows a memorial entry in a new handwriting and after it copies of a number of letters of condolence written to Judge Cooper, and several poems contributed by mourning, but now unknown friends. It was an age of formality and even the expressions of grief and sympathy were formal and artificial, although doubtless sincere.

From these expressions of sorrow, typical of the times, I have selected the following to show that Hannah had many friends and mourners besides Colonel Cary, and to show the then prevailing method of expressing grief and sympathy:

IN MEMORY OF THE LATE AMIABLE H. C.

Hast thou not seen the lucid ray of Even!

Far, in the west, diffuse its modest ray;  
And mark'd the bright, Cerulean beam of Heaven  
Cheer and irradiate the Orient day?

Hast thou not seen Religion's powerful aid  
Fresh luster to the brow of youth, impart?  
And Charity, in Cooper's form portray'd,  
Warm and ameliorate the human heart!

Yes—*thou hast* seen, meek gratitude express'd,  
Where beauty (lowly bends) to Virtue's shrine  
And Pity's pure oraison, address'd  
*To Him*, who bade Ethereal glories shine.

Wrap'd in the sable garniture of Woe,  
Where pendent Cypress shades funereal gloom—  
The muse, her plaintive requiem, taught to flow,  
And Friendship wept, at Cooper's silent tomb.

'Twas *Thine*, to animate life's swift career,  
 Mild, modest, artless, innocently gay—  
 'Twas *thine*, to fill an *higher, nobler sphere*,  
 With sainted spirits in the realms of day.

For thee sweet maid! resplendent beams of thought,  
 Wisdom's rich lore, by seraph's hands were given,  
 Thy spotless soul, the *pure effulgence* caught,  
 It sparkled, was exhaled, and went to Heaven.

BY A YOUNG LADY.

Philadelphia, September 26th, 1800.

Death, ere thou has killed another,  
 Fair, and learned, and good as she  
 Time shall throw a dart at thee.

On the 10th instant, departed this life, Miss Hannah Cooper, eldest daughter of Wm. Cooper, Esq. of Coopers-town. Her death was occasioned by a sudden fall from her horse, on the road between Cooperstown and the Butternutts, about one mile from the latter place—

The merit and accomplishments of this excellent young lady, who was universally respected, as she was extensively known, combined with the melancholy circumstances of her untimely exit, will long be remembered with mingled admiration and regret, by all who had the happiness of her acquaintance.

Her friends, her neighbors, and the forlorn objects of her compassionate bounties, will forever cherish, with avaricious sadness, the endearing memory of her exemplary virtues— Her inconsolable Parents! . . .

But who can paint their sorrow!  
 Can imagination trail amidst its vast creation, hues so sad!

Cease, woe struck mourners, check the trickling eye,  
 Full sacrifice enough to fortune's given;  
 The treacherous earth, that smiles so seemingly,  
 Teems big with death, and death's the debt of Heaven,  
 Waste not in idle grief the silent hour,  
 If shielded virtue gard the honest breast,  
 Surrendering sorrow sheaths his blunted power,  
 Death hides his sting and droops his baffled crest.

Rome, Sept. 29th, 1800.

Lines on the Death of an amiable and beautiful young lady  
 at ——— on Sept. 10th, 1800—by Mr. ———

Death took it in his empty skull  
 He'd be a beau on next birth-day,  
 And needs a nosegay he must pull  
 To make him up a choice *boquet*.

To Beauty's garden straight he hied,  
 With sweeping scythe her flowers to mow;  
 "Your trouble spare" the owner cried,  
 "By my advice to Otsego go."

Tho' here fond bees for sweets may swarm,  
 Their tasteless buzzings do not mind  
 For there each grace that sense can charm,  
 In one fair blooming flower you'll find.

Quick to this lovely fragrant rose  
 His icy fingers he applies;  
 Death's finest of fine birth-day beaux,  
 For in his breast Hannah dies!



Her bloom's bequeathed to blushing morn,  
Her fragrance with the zephyrs blends;  
But ah! to whom is left the thorn?  
Sharp in the bosom of her friends.

MISS HANNAH COOPER.

Sept. 24th, 1800.

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MY DEAR FRIEND

The awful and calamitous visitation with which it has pleased the Almighty to afflict you and your dear Family, reached me yesterday.

To renew your grief by any offer of consolation is a hard task, but I cannot on this mournful occasion entirely suppress the feelings of friendship— To say that I sympathize with sincerity is but a faint expression of my distress, no person acquainted with the *dear deceased*, could hear the melancholy tale with composure—but for me who possessed a more than common friendship for her, it was distressing in the extreme, mine was an affectionate and reverent friendship founded upon a long and intimate acquaintance with her uncommon worth— There is one circumstance, my friend which must be reflected upon with comfort—Her life—Her amiable and blameless life was such as to secure her an everlasting portion of that happy state, of which she was often thoughtfull— May we while we regret her absence endeavor to imitate her conduct.

The subject grows to painful for me— Indulge me in one last affectionate and sincere Tear—it is a small tribute to her blessed memory.

Adieu.

RIC'D R. SMITH.

Philadelphia, September 20th, 1800.

New York, 9 mo. 30th, 1800.

DEAR FRIEND—

I know it is but little a friend can say that may have much tendency to alleviate such pain and affliction, that the and thy family experience, in the loss of your dear Hannah—its but a few days past, since I read the afflicting account—My regard and love for her was such, I feelingly participate in mourning the loss of her.

The present fall I propos'd seeing Cooperstown, one of the pleasing circumstances I contemplated in the intended visit was to see and be with her, and the rest of the family—Thee knows, & I know, its much easier for the Tongue or Pen to speak on so affecting a subject than for the heart of the afflicted to experience what is said—however this we are confident of “that a sparrow falls not without his knowledge, much less man”—We see but little ahead, nay in comparison, none, the end of poor dear Hannah is extremely afflicting, but we know not whether ever after she would have been so well prepared for the great change—

I am sure her Father & Mother, with the rest of her relations, have one consolation among many, in the remembrance of her, which now must be the greatest of all, that is “she was a good girl, & I doubt not is gone to rest, a comfortable hope of which will operate on the mind, so as in part to alleviate extreme mourning—not looking back but forward, hoping that we may be thus prepared, that whenever it is our lot to bid adieu here, we may be likewise ready—

Farewell my dear friend, believe me to be  
thy very affectionate,

J. PEARSALL.

## MY DEAR FRIEND

Just as I was determined to write you with every sentiment of gratitude, Acknowledge your friendly letter was most sothing & flattering to my heart, the tender interest you appeared to take in my affairs, & the prudent & judicious council you gave, all confirmed the opinion I had long nourished of your Philanthropy & Friendly disposition to my much lamented Friend & all his family— Just as I had commenced my letter, Betsy with a most dejected countenance entered with a newspaper, exclaiming, Oh Mama poor Miss Cooper! What about her, oh read that most direful account—

How shall I address you on a subject so painful, my heart has from that moment sympathized with you, it revived all those painful ideas that the loss of my beloved son gave me, Yes my friend, I felt for you, I mourn your loss, She was a jewel of immense value to you & her friends— Yes it is over, the painful conflict is past, & she Blessed shade is at Peace. What abundant consolation will a retrospect of her short life afford you— and soon will you be convinced that she is far better off, than those who have the debt still to discharge— Soon must all, that now bask in the sunshine of prosperity, submit to the unrelenting hand of death, she has done her duty and will be rewarded—her character is sealed—nothing can now happen to disturb her or your repose.

The friend that weeps ore the grave of his departed friend this day, most assuredly shall, in a very short time be succeeded by his mourning relatives, there is a constant succession, we tumble in, one after the other, & yet mourn as if we had a lease for our lives— Death must not be viewed as the greatest evil—evil certainly no— We are deprived 'tis true of some good, but let us always act rationally & then we shall view every point on its proper ground—

Excuse the liberty I have taken in addressing you at this period, when your heart is still bleeding, I well know few people can pay acceptable visits to the afflicted, but a sympathy so powerful as I felt for you appeared to do away all ceremony & I felt myself compelled to offer you some consoling ideas—if anything I can say will for a moment mitigate the severity of your grief, I shall be rewarded for the anxiety the doubts have occasioned.

Her reign was short, & what is the product of the longest & best of lives, are they not evils strewed in every human path, can we traverse any without difficulty? No—a long life will evince the truth of this—the best & most fortunate can only obtain a character which time will efface—nothing permanent here—let us be wise in time & act justly on all subjects—then may we enjoy the blessings which are in our power.

May God bless you & yours, with health & every earthly blessing—is the sincere prayer of your Friend,

ANNE FRANCIS.

Philadelphia,

October 4th, 1800.

It is evident from the following and other letters, that Hannah had a premonition of death; perhaps she was what the Scotch call “fey.”

#### MY DEAR FRIEND

On the 23rd Instant, I recd. a letter from Mr. A. Tenbroeck, containing the truly melancholy and distressing intelligence that Miss Cooper—alas! is no more!—this is an event, which at any time, and under almost any circumstances would be very afflicting, and a loss irreparable, but the *manner* in which it has come, renders the same painful, distressing and afflictive, beyond imagination— In such



case what can I offer, or say, by way of consolation? Indeed I have nothing—it would be well for me if I had—for verily I am not without much occasion for it myself—to say that your daughter was good and amiable, would be only saying what is well known to yourself, and all who had the happiness of her acquaintance, and would only perhaps be adding accumulated distress to the severest affliction. In one sense, this may be true—but in another it must be a source of inexpressible comfort and satisfaction and thereby afford some relief to your sorrow, and consolation under your bereavement—that while her great goodness and amiableness endeared her to all her acquaintances, they have made her meet for the Kingdom of Heaven, and prepared her to change her abode (and that in an instant, with hardly a momentary pause) from among mortals—a state at best of vicissitude, pain and sorrow, for an abode among the Blessed. *Our loss* is truly *her gain*— As sure as this consideration can assuage your own, and the grief of the Family on this melancholy catastrophe, and offered ground of consolation, and surely it is of all others the greatest—it must be abundantly yours— During my visit with you last summer, which I must e'en think of with pleasure, tho' now mixed with much alloy, in some of my walks with Miss Cooper—once or twice in particular, when passing through that lonely mansion back of your house, of which she has now, alas! become an inhabitant, I have heard her express the same sentiment which Mr. Tenbroeck mentions in his letter to me, which she had expressed in conversation with him and some others—but a few days before, nay but a day or two before her unhappy fate, of her belief or impression that her abode in this world would not be of long continuance—in one instance her words in answer to an observation of mine were—“if it should be as you say, thirty or forty years—what a moment—what a span—what a vapor—how in-

significant compared with that state of existence which awaits me hereafter, how important that, of how little moment this." Amiable woman— Too soon—alas! for thy friends, has thou realised thy apprehensions! Thy mild and gentle spirit has taken its flight from the present imperfect and chequer'd state of things to one more congenial with thy native purity, excellence & virtue. It is ours to lament Hanah's death—tho' death to thee is great gain. My friend—what a dream—what a meteor—what a vapor—in the expressive language of your daughter, this state of things really is—all that makes it desirable is, the society and enjoyment of our friends—and we scarce find a friend when death or some unfortunate occurrence or other snatches them from our embrace—so it is. It is our duty to acquiesce—but I am only paining yours, and my own feelings afresh, by recalling to recollection in so particular manner, the magnitude of our loss. Accept my sincere sympathy and condolence in the affliction of you and yours, and of my best regards and good wishes.

Farewell, God bless you,

Yours &c.

J. H. IMLAY.

Alentown, September 27th

1800.

New Jersey.

DEAR SIR, AND UNFORTUNATE FRIEND,

It is impossible for me to describe to you, the keen anguish and sorrowful heart on the fatal news of the supreme dispensation of Heaven upon your virtuous, worthy and truly lovely daughter. My trembling hand dare hardly presume to address itself to you on this truly melancholy event—but I rely entirely on your friendship to me.

Permit me therefore, my dear Sir, to mingle my abundant tears, and sincere ones, with yours, and the desolated family. Alas! could I expect to hear such a dreadful recital, while I was enjoying silently, and within myself, the sweet hope of beholding once more—and within a short time—that uncommonly amiable mortal—could I but express myself in truer terms, or more sympathetical words, you would be convinced of the sincere part I take with you, and your dear family, on that unexpected, horrible! event—

Be ye all convinced of my sincere sorrow, for your loss. I remain with true sentiments of high esteem, for you all.

Your respectful servant

and afflicted friend,

HOUDIN.

Albany, September 15th, 1800.

Upwards of four score years passed over the village. The changes are many; success crowns the work of some, and failure is the fate of others; families become prosperous and prominent and others long established in the front rank of the social life of the town suffer vicissitudes and are forced to part with their old homes and materially modify their manner of life. Into these years are woven many an event of interest, some tragic, some amusing, and some scandalous, but all vital to the actors. From them I have selected two for repetition here; one a local tragedy and the other a state-wide scandal.

The tragedy is comparatively recent; while the scandal dates back a century and more:

About forty years ago a rich Southerner bought Lakelands, remodeled it, and proposed to make it his home. His family consisted of a wife, son, and daughter. The boy was a little wild. At this time there was living in the stone house near the head of the lake a very attractive young woman with whom the son fell desperately in love. She would, however, have none of him. He persisted in his attentions until one beautiful October day he persuaded her to let him row her across the lake to Hyde Hall. All the way he urged her to marry him. As they reached the dock, he again asked her, adding: "This is the last time." She persisted in her refusal although he declared that he would shoot himself unless she accepted him. He stepped from the boat, and standing on the dock blew out his brains. Not long after, the house was vacated by the family, sold, and never since has been occupied. Is it the shadow of this tragedy which hangs over it? Ever since it has been known as haunted. What form the "hant" appears in I cannot tell you, as no one living to-day ever spent a night in the house. There it has stood, gray, gaunt, and abandoned, gazing over the lake toward the scene of the tragedy.

Not long afterwards the boy's sister married and within a year died. One morning, while driving her team of horses at the Four Corners, the unhappy mother dropped the reins and fell back dead. Her



husband lived on for a time by himself until one day he was paralyzed and shortly died. Thus, in a few years, what seemed to be a prosperous family had disappeared entirely, and now almost is forgotten.

The scene moves back over a century; Richard Fenimore Cooper, who died in 1813, is living with his beautiful wife, Ann Cary, and a family of sons. Among his intimate friends is George Clarke, the builder of Hyde Hall. The relations between Ann and George were the subject of some scandal before Richard died. Very shortly after his funeral Ann went off with her admirer. She told my father that they were married at once; but the scandal was not quieted by the rumor that the new husband had a wife and family in England; as to them she said that he had secured an American divorce before she married him.

Some seven or eight months after the death of Richard, Alfred Clarke was born. Was he a Clarke or a Cooper? That was the question which convulsed the society, not alone of Cooperstown, but of much of the State for years. His mother declared that he was Richard's son, but as he was born in lawful wedlock he was legally a Clarke, the son of George.

In time another son was born and named for his father, George. Alfred was one of my father's best friends. As time went on, he grew more and more like the Coopers until he became convinced that he really

was a Cooper, and he called himself Alfred Cooper Clarke. That he was not a Clarke seemed to be accepted by his legal father, as when he died he left Hyde Hall, and most of his property, to his second son George. It was a curious case of dual personality, for when some of the English Clarke property passed to the eldest son of George Clarke, it was Alfred who went to England and got it as the eldest son born in lawful wedlock.

When his mother, Ann, died, she left her property to Alfred; and it was Alfred's conviction that he was a Cooper which led him to leave Swanswick and other property to Theodore Keese and me on certain contingencies; and it was the blunder of a lawyer which prevented our inheriting it, as all the conditions which attached to our intended inheritance were fulfilled.

## SOME ABANDONED HOUSES

AFTER a day spent in driving over the more secluded, but very beautiful, by-ways of the County, one is impressed by the disappearance, almost accomplished, of three of the most prominent features of old-time country life; the country gentleman; the country tavern and the country church. Perhaps they were so closely allied that the vanishing of the first destroyed the other two.

All over the countryside are to be found the abandoned homes of one-time prosperous farmers; and frequently the more pretentious houses of the well-to-do land owner; the windows gone; the doors open and swinging in the wind; and the flowers still growing and running wild in the old-time gardens.

The number of such abandoned places is appalling. Each year some of them either collapse under the attacks of the weather or burn up. In many of the more remote spots nothing is left but a cellar and a few rose bushes and apple trees, and great lilac bushes. Gradually the rural population is shrinking to a strip of land along the better highways in the valleys.

Among the houses still standing are some of importance in their day; the old stone house at Butts Corners;

"Col. Dunbar's house," a little to the west, which must have been years ago a beautiful place, with its brick main building and huge wooden additions, and great trees on either side of the entrance. Now only the brick part stands, trembling to its fall; the great trees are only stumps; while the wings can be traced, amidst the briars, by the cellar walls and ruins of the huge central chimneys.

There are still left some fine old frame colonial houses here and there; one near Stoney Lonesome; one on the Colliers road and others far back in the hills, among them the one near Geoways Pond. Their days are numbered; the best of workmanship and the finest material, unaided by man, soon yield to the elements in our northern climate.

One wonders why they were built; and again why they were abandoned. It is easy to see, in the imagination, the one-time inhabitants; the gardens and living-rooms gay with youth; the playing children; the prosperous men and women of middle life; and the older ones with their knitting and books by the fireside and on the porch. Where have they gone and why? Have conditions of life changed so as to eliminate forever the country home?

When these great houses were built the owners probably held considerable tracts of land; part they cultivated and part they rented to farmers. Fuel was



plenty and easily obtained from the woods, which came down to the meadows, and labor was cheap and contented with country life. The contrast between the luxuries and pleasures of life in the country and that in the smaller towns and cities was far less marked than it is now.

By degrees the land ran out; fuel became scarce and dear; as did labor; savings were exhausted and the young people, lonely and discontented, went to the villages and cities. The more fortunate of the old people went to the graveyard; the others to the poor-house. I am told that the last occupant of Col. Dunbar's house died on the county-farm.

Although the country is dotted over by these gaunt reminders of a life which has gone, in every stage of ruin, there is very little known of their actual history, and a singular dearth of legends such as might be expected to attach themselves to such romantic objects. Most of the ghost stories and tales belong to the houses still occupied, the others stand lonely and often forbidding, keeping within their empty walls and open doors and staring windows the mystery of their past and the story of their one-time occupants.

Col. Dunbar's house is an exception to this rule, as about it hangs a tradition, common enough in some neighborhoods, but unusual here—that of a secret chamber: it is very nebulous, as is the story of the old

house. There is no such room in the part which still stands, unless it is in the attic, which is wholly inaccessible, so if it existed it must have been in one of the long-vanished additions. One story is that years ago a spy was hidden in this room; who he was, by whom hidden, from whom, and in what war are all alike forgotten. Another tradition which goes more into detail, is, that about a century ago, either the owner of the house or one of his immediate family, was imprisoned in Connecticut for some offense. Elaborate plans were made for his escape, including a relay of horses every five miles. When all was ready he fled, dressed in an extra gown worn into the jail by his wife. He was pursued by the sheriff and a posse. For a time the chase was hot, but the fugitive, availing himself of the fresh horses, gradually gained on his pursuers, who, as my informant said, had only "jaded mounts." He reached the Dunbar house far in advance and was hidden in the secret room. For months he lay concealed there, a "fugitive from justice," as the neighbors still call him. His hiding place, I was told, was beside one of the chimneys and had a scuttle opening on to the roof through which, when all was quiet, he was in the habit of escaping at night for exercise. This story seems definitely to locate the hiding place as beside the big chimney in the extension; and it also tells of shelves used for linen as helping in its concealment.

It was the custom in this country to combine wooden extensions with brick or stone main buildings, and most of the old houses followed this habit. Perhaps the funds of the owners became so impaired that a cheaper form of construction was adopted or the idea prevailed of a substantial main building for warmth during the long cold winters, into which the family withdrew, to blossom forth into the more commodious wings with the arrival of spring. I can recall about forty houses with field-stone main buildings and wooden additions, still occupied.

On and near Angel Hill are many large old houses long deserted and rapidly falling into ruin. One of them is especially interesting as it was abandoned some twenty-five years ago completely furnished, and even to-day much of the furniture is left; the bedsteads and feather beds are rotting on the bedroom floors; carpets are covered in places with growing weeds and grass; great holes are in the floors; the roof and windows are largely gone, and one who explores its mysteries takes the chance of a bad fall.

The churches and the taverns lasted a little longer, as they were generally in or near the small hamlets; but their time has come, and all over the country are closed churches and inns. The hamlets have not escaped and are rapidly shrinking.

I recall a beautiful old colonial church by a lakeside;

the cushions are turned up in the pews to protect them from dust; the melodeon stands by the pulpit; the hymnbooks are in the racks; everything waits for the congregation which never comes.

Many of the hamlets have almost disappeared. A respect for their feelings prevents my calling the nearer ones by name. Of the more remote "Welcome" is typical; it grew up around the junction of five roads; a church; a couple of shops; and perhaps a dozen houses or so, with a post office and schoolhouse. It lies in the bottom of a bowl-like valley and one looks up on all sides to the horizon, outlined against the sky by the rolling bare hilltops. The church is closed, and the school; the post office has gone; the shop failed and shut up, because, as the only visible inhabitant told us, the people were too dishonest to pay their bills. Of the houses, seven are abandoned. It was early on a beautiful September afternoon; not a soul was visible but our informant, who was not a resident, but was taking care of two old and infirm citizens of "Welcome." One of the houses was a really beautiful old Colonial house, spacious and in perfect condition. Its only surviving occupant was an elderly woman, who failed to open her door to repeated knockings. We asked the one visible human being if she wasn't lonely and how long she would stay; she said that she was, and that she didn't think she could stay much longer.



When, on a second visit, we were admitted to the old Colonial house, we found its sole occupant to be a delightful old woman of well on toward four score years, who invited us in and seemed glad of an opportunity to see and talk to outsiders. She told us how she had come there as a bride upwards of sixty years ago, and showed us over the really fine house, which was about a century old, and clean and neat as could be. Her husband had died years ago and her children were either dead or had long since moved to larger places; they took her to live with them in the winter time, she said, but every summer she returned alone to the old house. We talked of the past in "Welcome" and she told us how every seat in the abandoned church had been filled on Sundays. When I spoke of the schoolhouse which was falling down, she said sadly, "There are no children now."

The old people will die, perhaps have died; someone will close the houses, and "Welcome" will have nine, instead of seven, of its dozen homes abandoned. No wonder the cost of living goes up, when the productive land steadily grows less.

We left "Welcome" and looked back down on it with a feeling of relief, and even the short time we spent there was enough to give us a restless desire to leave and a dread of life in its silent and terrible loneliness. Truly "Welcome" has become "Farewell."

The story of our little manufacturing villages is the same; the factories have been forced by competition to close and the workmen and women have moved away.

We were rather rich in mills, and beautiful field-stone ones at that. The great stone building at Phoenix, after standing idle for years, was pulled down and used to build the new hospital at Cooperstown; the dam has gone; the shop has fallen into the Susquehanna and most of the little village is abandoned or fallen down.

Hope Factory still stands on the main road to Colliers—a beautiful stone building. We can only hope that modern commercial life can find some use for it. A quarter mile farther up the Oak Creek are the ruins of the Otsego Paper Mill; little but a chimney is left. Across the stream is Toddsville; the metropolis which grew up about this mill and the Union and Hope Factories. The workmen's houses are falling down, as are some of the better ones, but the fine old stone "store" still stands. The dam is gone, and of course with it the mill pond, with its multitude of white pond lilies and red cardinal plants.

Farther up the Creek are the broken dam and ruins of the grist mill at Fly Creek and, opposite them, the dilapidated saw mill. At Oaksville is a long vacant factory—the dam is gone, but the stone and brick buildings stand, and on the hill above them is the fine

old stone superintendent's house, with its classical portico.

Many a fortune has been made at these different mills, and when I was a boy, they were still running at a profit to their owners; but the times were already getting difficult for them and they followed the country gentlemen, and preceded the church and tavern, into the limbo of things doomed by the ever-changing conditions of modern life.

The story of Clintonville or, as it was often called, Clinton Mills, is a good illustration of the fate which is overtaking most of the small manufacturing hamlets of the County. Less than fifty years ago, it was a thriving little village on the Susquehanna, some two miles above Milford; there was the usual dam and factory or mill; a street lined with houses; a shop, and a railroad station where the trains stopped regularly, and all the life and activities of a thriving and contented rural community. To-day the dam, the factory, and all of the houses and buildings, except four, have vanished completely. Of these four, two are abandoned and falling down; the other two are occupied, but when the temporary demand for houses is over they too will be vacated and fall into decay. I doubt if many of the people living in the neighborhood to-day know that the place ever had a name.

All these evidences of a dying countryside are sad,

but they lend a sentimental charm to a beautiful country.

One sometimes finds a more cheering reminder of the past; in a very exclusive, walled-in burying ground near the highway, on the east side of the lake, is a tombstone which, after the usual inscription, giving the date of death as upwards of a century ago, sets forth the following all-sufficient epitaph:

She was born in Boston

Poor thing! Imagine the humiliation of having to die in Otsego.



## THE RED—THE BLACK—AND THE WHITE MAN

AN old letter or document, an arrow or spearhead, or any little personal belonging of those who are long dead, and whom we never saw, often is sufficient to arouse the imagination, and to call the owner or writer back from oblivion, to move for a time through our vision; while the image thus created may not be true to the original in form or appearance, at least it has some of his mental and moral traits, preserved by his handiwork.

The thousands of letters and documents which have survived from the years between 1750 and 1850, can repeople for us this country, and clothe it with an air of romance which may have been lacking, in the hard lives of the frontiersmen and women. Just so our Indian relics and legends fill the woods once more with red huntsmen and warriors, squaws and papooses. We cannot all see them, but the favored amongst us can; it is one of the sublime gifts of the very young; within a year I saw the touzled yellow head of a youngster, hidden in the tall grass, with ready bow and arrow, watching for the expected red warrior.

The red man and the earlier settlers we know only in this way. The black men, mentioned here, I knew personally in every instance but one; and the growth and changes of the town and country have taken place, for nearly three score years, under my eye.

The red man left few traces of his stay of unknown centuries at Otsego; the apple trees, and probably the remains of a clearing near the entrance to the Cooper grounds, were the only visible evidence of his occupancy of the land for a part, at least, of each year; but hidden by the woods and underbrush, there were other signs of his occupation; in places, just under the surface, were found the ashes of his camp fires, and pieces of his rude pottery, and of broken or lost stone implements and weapons; in other places were the bones of the long dead and forgotten residents.

There is the old Chief behind the River Street wall, and two skeletons were found in the Fernleigh grounds. In the fields, on the east side of the Susquehanna, included in Fernleigh-Over, have been discovered great numbers of Indian remains of all kinds. It was either the scene of a prehistoric battle, or used as a burying ground. I think that the evidence favors the battle-field. Long ago, when it was merely farmland and frequently cultivated, we used to follow the plow to collect the stone weapons and tools which were turned up every year. The large number of spearheads, arrow-

heads, and stone axes, with occasional bones, suggested a great battle.

Once, when a tree blew down, clutched in the fork of two roots, and overgrown with bark, was an Indian skull. A wounded warrior had dragged himself to the foot of the tree and there, with his head pillowed between two roots, died.

Whether the mound in the northeast corner of this field is an Indian burial mound or not has never been determined, but in it have been reburied the bones from time to time found in the neighborhood. The late Mrs. Potter had the tablet which marks it carved and placed where it is. Walking about the grounds one autumn day, Dr. Battershall came upon this tablet and mound and wrote on an old letter the following lines:

### MORTUI TE SALUTAMUS

White Man, Greeting: We, near whose bones you stand, were Iroquois. The wide land which now is yours was ours. Friendly hands have given back to us enough for a tomb.

(Inscription, Fernleigh.)

Engraved upon a stone on a fair lawn,  
Where, from the bosom of the mountain lake,  
The Susquehanna takes its winding way,  
And feels its first strange hunger for the sea,  
I read these words, in which a vanished race  
Gives salutation and pathetic thanks  
For deathly wound and sepulture.

Alas!

Such meed and recompense to those swart tribes  
Who held the marches of the wilderness  
And threw their fealty in the quivering scale  
That gave the Saxon empire of the West!

Their shades move on the pictured page of him,  
Who, on this spot flung o'er their savagery  
The Magic of Romance. Their stealthy feet  
Creep through the enchanted forests of our youth,  
But creeping ever to the eventide,  
Where vanish shades of outworn types.

Farewell!

And greeting to yet happier hunting-grounds,  
Sons of the twilight, martyrs of the dawn,  
Caught in the logic and the thrust of things!  
The weak give way that stronger may have room  
For sovereign brain and soul to quell the brute.  
Thus, in the epic of this earth, harsh rhythms  
Are woven, that break the triumph-song with moans  
And death cries. Still rolls the eternal song,  
Setting God's theme to grander, sweeter notes,  
For us to strike, fighting old savageries  
That linger in the twilights of the dawn.

Upon this sculptured stone, memorial  
Of sacrificial life, the cosmic word  
I read, the mystic music of the worlds.

WALTON W. BATTERSHALL.

Fernleigh, June 24, 1903.

Evidently arrow makers had lived and followed their trade at two spots on the banks of the Susquehanna; one on the east side, at the end of the grounds of River-



brink, where a cool spring emptied into the river, and the other, on the west bank, at the foot of a great pine, the stub of which stood for years in the field just below the old Hooker place. At each of them there was a great accumulation of chips of flint and broken or partially finished arrow and spear heads; they could be gathered from the bottom of the river at any time.

In the Cooper burying ground, lying at right angles to the graves and near the surface, is the skeleton of a man. He was first disturbed when Susan Fenimore Cooper's grave was dug. There was nothing found to identify him. He was probably an Indian, but possibly Levi Kelley who was hung for murder in the year 1827, and is said to have been surreptitiously buried in the graveyard.

By many historians Brant is considered the greatest of Indian chiefs; he was an intimate friend of Sir William Johnson and was the brother of Molly Brant, Sir William's housekeeper, who was the mother of most of Sir William's children; and who may have been married to Sir William by some Indian ceremony. If the following "memorial" is true, Brant in some ways shines by comparison with certain of his white contemporaries. It is endorsed, "A Memorial of John Tunnicliff Sufferings"; is dated twenty years after the sufferings complained of and shows, at least, a good memory and a tenacious pursuit of compensation.

A Memorandum of the sufferings & the Many losses Sustained by the subscriber, from The hands of the Contentental Troops &c. When Sir John Johnson and Several Others in Tryon County was disarmed, I with many Of the inhabitants was Brought to Major Funday's on the Mohawk River where we Took the Oath Newtrality and signed a bond on promise of being protected.

On the 10th day of August 1778 the inhabitants of our Back Settlements was partly Obligated to fly from their farms, while the other part was apprehended & Brought down Prisoners—together with our horses—Cows—& Sheep—which were drove in the front while We prisonors were Strongly guarded with fixt<sup>d</sup> Bayonets and if we did Not Please the Captain and his party, with our Manner of Traveling—we were obliged to mend our pace On the point of their fixted Bayonets,—thus we were compeled to march till we came Near Cherry-Valley where a halt was made, until a drum & fife arived,—then we were conducted to the Fort, by the Rogues March—when we came Near the fort—we was drawn up in a line at which time—insult followed insult,—the Officers & Soldiers first coming to one —And telling him that he Should Be hanged—& then to another & so on till the last pointing out the different deaths we should Suffer,—when their threatnings and diversion was over We was Commanded to March under a Strong guard—towards albany—we did so—but was Ordered to halt under the Gallows,—where we received another sort of ill treatment—Ruff Challenging the Cloths upon our Backs & Saying we Stole them from the solders—by this time a large Mob was collected by which we were Conduced—with Shouts—Huzzas Throwing Of dirt & Musick playing the Rogues March till we was Locked up in a dungeon—their kept Close till the remainder of our property was Wantonly taken.

My dwelling house—deary house Barn Stables & Sheep house all consumed by fire. My Crops of hay corn & Buildings, with my household goods & farmary working tools—together with a large Quantity of good Cheese with a eleven Stands of Beehives well filled—the which at that time was worth one Thousand pounds—all intirely distrowed,—My Neighbours & fellow Sufferers Oblidged to support themselves by working—from house to house—& to accomplish the whole—and a rightfull Coullouring on their unjust proceedings—were published in the Common Print as Enemies to the country.

The above Mentioned Cows were Sixteen in number all very good—which was drove Before me to Cherry-Vally—which I have Never seen Since—Nor received any thing in lew of them—the Number of Sheep that was then taken from me was forty three—I suppose Equal to the Best sheep in America—one of which was an English Ram Which Cost me a Journey to England—Six lambs I purchased But five of them died On the voyage—My Young stock of horned Cattle (Seven in Number) I received again the which I found on the south east side of hudsons River—by the help of a Replevy & the Sheriff of Albany—this Young stock was put to grass by William Hudson Ballard—Captain of the sixth Massachusetts Rigement—who commanded the party of soldiers which took Me & my property from my house—Some part of my horses I got Again & a part I received some pay for—the Commissioners used me well they said Not any Body had any Business with me—Mr. Jer<sup>r</sup> Van ransselear went to the Governor To know what to do—the Governour ordered General Starks to be sent out of albany and said he was as bad as the Indians—John M. Beckman being present the Tears came in his eyes when he heard my Complaint—Matthew Visser said I must after The war Sew any one that had any of My property



in his hand or had been possest with it—Said I had a Just right to Sew for it—and if I could not find such people—They would pay me for it—but I said Your Money is growing worse & might be But little help—he said I should be paid with such Money as would Buy me as good a Stock as I had lost—this hath been the Cause of my Not seeking Relief Sooner—for I was very desirous of knowing what was become of Wm. Hudson Ballard Who was the Man that commanded the Soldiers to take Me & my Property—the last year I was told he was dead—as I am likely to be caled upon for quit Rents for my Estate which I was at that time in possession—part of which is sold to put me & my Family in a way to live—I was kept off my farm for the space of Seven Years—Which on My return was a Bed of Briers—without either fence or Building I was obliged to sell upwards of a thousand acres of land to help—put my family farm & Stock in a way to live— But that was not Sufficient—for the farm is Still Much in debt—I have Not given any deed, to Subject those who purchased to pay the Quit Rents—this is in danger of Ruening Me—who was the cause of sending Such a gang of soldiers which consisted of old privateers men—for had these been our own Militia we could have found them again after the war—if honesty & Industry is to give place to such usage—then Roguery is the only thing that Will flourrish—when I was in my Strength & prosperity in the space of Twenty Years I Never Cleared so Much value as I lost By Captain Ballard.

At the Time Springfield was cut of—the Indians Came Back past My house with Several of the Inhabitants Prisoners—as soon as the first Indians came up they said we are Come for some of your Stock—for the prissonors to live upon—or we must unavoidably Starve—I told them I had taken the Oath of Newtrality & signed a Bond & was fully Resolved Not to do any thing to the contrary—I



asked them who was their Commander they said he was behind—when he came up they pointed to an Indian which they said was Captain Brant— I told him My Condition & Beged him to go his way—he said he could not his prisonors must starve—upon My giving him flat denial—one of the party came to me & said for God's sake what are you about if you have any regard for life let them have some stock—Captain Brant said if you will go & your family & stock you shall be paid for what we take—and what is left behind your losses shall be made good & you shall be well used. I said I had Rather die on the spot—when I see I could not get shut of them I told one of the Boys to turn out a Couple of cows—but I neither would Turn them out nor set any price on them, but Brant said I should be paid for them—soon after peace was proclaimed—then Captain Brant Sent me down Twelve pounds Halifax Money for my Two Cows.

JOHN TUNNICLIFF.

Otsego June 30th AD 1798

Poor John Tunnicliff! He cuts rather a sorry figure! Evidently a tory, and apparently an associate of Sir John Johnson's and doubtless of Walter Butler's he emerges from obscurity and passes before us merely because his petition has survived; and to emphasize the inferiority of some of his race to the vanished red man.

The two following documents are all else we know of him. He evidently suspected his neighbors near Canajoharie. We wonder whether he ever found his cows or got paid for them, and can't help hoping that he

didn't. He must have lived somewhere not far from the village of Springfield and probably between it and the Mohawk. He went up and down through the wilderness seeking his property:

The Bearer John Tunnicliff has our Permission to go to the House of one Robert Nellis, or wherever he may be in Tryon County for the purpose of obtaining his Property in the Possession of the said Nellis in an amiable way without having recourse to law for a recovery of the same. This pass to continue in force for the space of fourteen days from the date.

Albany 7th October 1780

MAT VISSCHER	} Commissioners for Conspiracies
SAML STRINGER	
ISSAC D. FONDA	

By Samuel Stringer John M. Beeckman & Jer V. Rensselaer Commissioners for detecting & defeating Conspiracies &c.

Permission is hereby Granted to John Tunnicleaf & John Rowbottom to pass and repass from this City to the Butternuts in Tryon County, they having given surety for their peaceable Conduct and to Return again to this their present place of abode on or before the eighth day of October next.

Given under my hand by order of the Board

JER V. RENSSELAER one of  
the Board.

Albany 21st Sep, 1780.

To all concerned

On a very early list of the owners of the Croghan Patent, made by R<sup>d</sup> Smith, "John Tunicliff" is set down as owning three thousand acres "near the Oaksne," but his name does not appear on the old maps.

The following bill rendered at about the time of John's misfortune shows the activities of the militia and how they were fed:

June 29th 1777 General Harkemans Bill then sent by General Harkemans desire 31 lb. Cheses to Chery Valey for Ofisers on thare Persueat after the Indians on the Susquehanna.

Wate 50 lb. at on shilling	2.10.0
I suppose as the Melishe might be 250 men	
Which staid all night	10.0.0
	<hr/>
	12.10.0

June 29th 1777, on thare return they Eat me a Larg Oven full of Bred and as much Chees as tha Liked and 18 Cows milk Night and Morning and all night 17 Horses in the Moeing ground.

Brant did burn Springfield, but no one was killed and, had he been in command when Cherry Valley was attacked, probably many of the horrors of that massacre would have been prevented.

The black man almost has disappeared from our country; where once he filled an important place. In the early days negroes were bought and sold and most of the colored people of the village were descended from

slaves brought here by the early settlers. Judge Cooper brought some with him as did the Husbands and other families. Among the existing old papers are many bills of sale of negroes, men, wenchies, and children. It was a kindly servitude, where the slave had all the comforts of life and often the affection and friendship of the master.

Joseph Stewart, "The Governor," was for 30 years butler and body servant at Otsego Hall and its predecessor. He now lies in the corner of the Cooper burying ground, while "Joe Tom" and "Jennie York" lie in the easterly part of Christ Churchyard, in what was long and disrespectfully known as "Nigger Heaven."

Jennie's unique epitaph "She had her faults, but was kind to the poor" has made her famous. For years all of it had sunk out of sight except the words: "Jennie York: She had her faults." Poor Jennie! She was an inveterate thief, but stole largely to give to her poorer or less fortunate friends.

Of all the colored folk of Cooperstown "Joe Tom" easily stands first. He once belonged to the Husband's family. Never was a blacker black man, never a bigger one in every way, and never a more talented one. He played the triangle for young and old to dance; he cooked at all picnics, and his chowder was wonderful; he rowed the boat and shouted to Natty Bumppo opposite the echo; he rang the church bell and warmed



the church, and, with the same cheerful smile and kindly manner, he dug the grave and buried the dead—or those of them who died in the Episcopal faith or had other good claim to a place in Christ Churchyard. Like most of his race, in those days, he was a great respecter of persons, and as he grew older more and more drew a sharp social line.

When his time came, and he joined his people in “Nigger Heaven,” all the town mourned, and the youth of the village, to whom dollars looked bigger than cart wheels, bought and put up his stone by subscription. I can still hear his triangle tinkle; see his gleaming teeth, and hear his stentorian voice calling off the “figgers” of the square dances.

Looking back through the vista of nearly three score years, one can see many other dusky faces—with glittering teeth and bright eye—all kindly—all helping to make life attractive: there was “Joe,” old Joe Tom’s daughter, and Charlie Burhans. Charlie never was young so far as I can remember. He was the great Nimrod of his people. He resembled a huge bundle of rags. Apparently he never discarded any clothing, but merely added anything he acquired from time to time. He had an enormous muzzle-loading gun, and the most wonderful and indescribable stutter. When he tried to speak his whole face shook and his jaw fairly danced. Charlie’s favorite game was ground hogs, of

which he was very fond. Unhappy was the woodchuck which Charlie located. He always got him in the end. One would see, in a field, a motionless drab object, which might be a stone or a pile of old cloth or bags, but which was Charlie. It moved slowly and at long intervals—for the woodchuck it was death, certain and relentless.

Henry Williams was an aristocrat among his people—tall, straight, and handsome; he hunted with the white sportsmen of the village, particularly with old Dan Boden. Many are the partridges which I have seen them flush in Bowers' woods along the river and lake; Hen, with the dog, would follow the woods while Boden poled a boat and shot over the water. They were a striking pair; Boden with his white hair, tall and slender, and as good-looking for one race as was Williams for the other.

In those times democracy reigned, at least among the whites. There played with us a little black boy, Johnnie Jackson, who felt his color so much that he used to say that, if it would make him white, he would willingly be skinned alive. What became of Johnnie and Hen Williams I don't know—they just faded out of life.

Another character of the colored people was Black Dick. He looked after old William Averell and drove his team of black coach horses and great coach, so large that it was familiarly known as "the Ark."

Dick was the last of the old colored body servants who made life easy and pleasant for their masters. When years ago "Marse Averell" died and was buried by old "Joe Tom" in Christ churchyard, Dick was inconsolable. Soon stories were being whispered about town of a ghostly figure seen in the churchyard, which seemed to rise from the ground and move slowly about. Many townspeople claimed to have seen it, and the timid avoided the streets about the graveyard after dark.

Those were the days of real darkness too; the streets were only lighted, here and there, by a kerosene lamp, and the wayfarer after dark carried a lantern, generally with a candle in it. The writer well remembers the blackness of those nights, an impenetrable blackness which seemed to rise before one like a wall; this gave a ghost a great advantage.

The stories of the "hant," seen moving in the depth of the graveyard, were so persistent, that finally a committee of the braver spirits of the town decided to spend a night among the graves watching. In due time they were rewarded; a shadowy form was seen to rise and move about old Averell's grave. After the first shock was over, they closed in on the ghostly visitant and found old Black Dick; faithful even after death, he crept nightly to his master's grave, and watched and mourned over it. His grief had unsettled his mind, and he lived but a short time.

These Red Men and Black Men were—many of them—white in heart and soul, more so perhaps than some of the dominant race, which gradually crowded them out of our countryside.

The books of Judge Cooper and of the Settlement Shop teem with intimate details of the early life of the village and county. In one is an agreement of employment, which is a bit of a shock to us in its recognition of the personal liberty of the employed in allowing him "the last day in each month in which to get drunk." An honest recognition of human frailty and of one of the very common pleasures of frontier life in those days.

Judge Cooper, when he rented his house for the winter of 1798, paid two dollars a week board for any members of his family who remained in it and three shillings extra per person when he "makes a dinner for his friends" and "on all occasions finds his own liquors."

In one is written the contract for all the carpenter work on the Old Stone House. It is worth repeating as showing the informality of such transactions in those days. The house is here to speak for the honesty of the contractor.

Articles of Agreement made this fifth day of November, 1803, Between William Cooper and Cyrenus Clark—viz: the said Cyrenus Clark agrees to do all the Carpenter and Joiner work that is and ought to be done of in and to a certain Stone House that the said William is now about erecting



on the corner of Water and Second Streets in length forty two feet and in Breadth Thirty six feet to be finished in a masterly and workmanlike manner from the bottom of the Seller to the turning of the Key of the Front Door. The work to be done in the following manner—good and workmanlike stairs from the Seller to the Trap Door on the Roof—to have four Rooms on the first Floor a hall and China Room to be wainscotted with Pine Work and every other way finished as a House wherein the said William now lives. The second story to be laid off with a Hall and five Rooms and finished in like manner as the house wherein the said William now lives. There are to be nine windows in front, four windows in the Gable and East besides the Garret Windows and two in the Garret in the West End, five windows in the rear. The said William Cooper to find all the materials for said House of every kind and the said Cyrenus Clark to find himself and hew all Timber for said House. The Front Door to have a handsome Portico with seats. Two outside Seller Doors and the said Cyrenus is to receive for all said work five hundred Dollars.

WILLIAM COOPER  
CYRENUS CLARK

The miscellaneous character of the currency in circulation in Cooperstown, in 1796, is shown by a deposit sent to an Albany Bank by Judge Cooper:

2560	Dolls. in Silver
935½	“ “ Paper
540	Crowns
36	E. Guineas
7	Half “

9½	Half Joes	£1734.12
15	French Guineas	
6½	Pistoles	
1	Moidore	

The cash taken at the Bank 4,461 Dolls. and 50 cts.

A cosmopolitan settlement: I doubt if New York could do much better to-day. There should be added to this list, Pork, Ashes, Maple Sugar, and Wheat, all of which passed as currency—but not at the Bank.

Here are some things told by the account book of the Settlement store:

Charity Graves bought four pair of stockings for £1.11 sh. in 1807; Ralph Worthington bought a quart of rum for himself on June 27, 1807, for 2 s & 2 d and a piece of ribbon for his wife at 6d; On June 29, Abner Graves had a pint of rum for 1 sh; Abner had rum and brandy and sugar every few days. Trinity Church had an account and once, at least, bought rum, but most of its purchases were for Christ Church building. Recompense Graves was a great buyer of rum and sugar and tea. A quart of rum lasted about two days. He or she, I know not which, was fond of fine clothes, as the account opens with eighteen yards of muslin at 2 sh. a yard and closes with three and one half yards of velvet at 9 sh. a yard.

The account books of those days were quite gossipy and went much into detail. We know from them for

whom the purchases were made, and what the debtor did and where he lived:

Herman Pier of Pierstown bought an Umbrella for 19 sh. John M. Bowers bought "3¾ yds. of 'Velvet' Ribbon for Mrs. B." in Feby. 1807; "1 lb. Hyson Tea for Felix 12 sh." and on May 7 "1 Umbrella for self 19 sh." "Mrs. Ann Carey of Springfield" and Miss Carey bought great quantities of gloves and household supplies. Ziba Roberson bought silk for his wife. Judge Cooper bought many things for "Betty" and "Sarah" and Mrs. Ransom and some things for Allen and gave a pair of blankets to Walker; all in 1807.

The "Waste Book" kept by R. R. Smith when he ran the Settlement store and dated 1790-2 is less intimate in its entries but curious as showing frontier prices:

John Rooseboom paid 8 sh. for a shovel and Jacob Morris 10 sh. 1 d for a pair of shoes. Rum in those years cost 5 sh & 6d. a gallon, and there was an immense quantity sold. Tea was 3 sh 6d a pound and stockings 5 sh & 10d a pair. Calico was 5 sh. a yard and thimbles 3d. A spelling book cost 1 sh. 8d (which may explain some bad spelling) and Blankets £1 12 sh. a pair.

Other things than books tell tales of those times: two little silver spoons—tied with a pink ribbon and marked "H. D.," small, light, very thin, and showing the marks of teeth in the bowls—vividly suggest their

one-time owner, Helen Dunbar. When she lived and died the spoons unfortunately cannot tell us, but we know where—in Colonel Dunbar's old house, part brick and part wood, now abandoned; the brick part standing with open doors and windows; surrounded by its overgrown gardens and lawns; its ornamental trees cut down; its wooden additions vanished and its great outbuildings flattened to the ground. Somehow these spoons have the magic touch to restore the great house and its surroundings, and we see it again teeming with life. Among the phantoms, Helen Dunbar, small, dainty, attractive, surrounded by friends and admirers, without a thought of the dismal fate the future held for the old house.

Then there are six great silver forks which tell another story. They are marked "M" for "Morehouse" and belonged to the builder of Woodside. They nearly cost their owner his election years ago. In those days two-pronged forks, of base metal, were good enough for anyone, and four-pronged silver forks were the badge of intolerable aristocratic tendencies.

In the heat of the campaign, Judge Morehouse's opponent made against him the terrible charge of being at heart an aristocrat, and, in proof of it pointed to these heavy four-pronged silver forks which he accused the Judge of actually using at his daily meals.

The battle waged fiercely, but Judge Morehouse won.



After his victory he gave a great reception to his friends and opponents. It was doubtless one of those old-fashioned country parties, where the first guest arrives about noon and ties his team to a tree, and the last leaves about two A.M. In the center of the dining-room, in open and jeering defiance, hung from the ceiling, a dozen of those heavy four-pronged silver forks.

It was Judge Morehouse who gambled away Woodside at Hyde Hall, and who after moving out never looked at it until he was able to buy it back again. It is said that when daily he crossed Main Street he always turned his face to the west so as not to see his old home.

The village of Cooperstown was favored, beyond most towns of its size, in the character of its residents and visitors. Among the former was a long list of very able and well-known men and the latter included some of the best known men of their times, here and abroad. Its hospitality was most lavish, its society delightful and cultured, and the struggle for life and money, if it existed, kept well in the background. The churches were numerous and prosperous; the former due to Judge Cooper's announcement that he would give a lot to any religious society which would put up a building. One of the treats of my youth was to see the Baptists dipped in the Susquehanna at the outlet of the lake. We always went hoping that one at least would slip from the parson's grasp and drift off down the river;

but I don't remember that any ever were lost in this way.

The town in those days was relatively and actually a much more important place than it is now. All of the big houses, now closed for most of the year, then were the homes of their owners and open and occupied all the time except for an occasional trip away by some of the family. There were no factories in the village, but it was the market town of a very rich and prosperous farming community. The Main Street, from the Cooper grounds west, was lined with hitching posts, and, on Saturday afternoons, every one had a team tied to it while the farmer and his wife, and often his children, did their shopping.

For years hops made this country rich, and built many of the great farmhouses still standing. The Otsego County hop was considered the best grown in the world. Every one grew hops and it was thought that they couldn't be grown anywhere in this country except in our neighborhood. Extraordinary profits were made and it was not unusual for a hop grower to make the value of his farm out of one crop. Prices once reached one dollar and sixty cents a pound and the cost of production was about twelve cents. The crop was a very speculative one, which added to its interest. Buyers came from everywhere and thousands of "pickers" from the neighboring cities.

This hop-picking time was not without its suppressed excitements. Much hard liquor was absorbed and the usual number of free fights resulted. Before and after the actual picking began and finished, great crowds of tramps and city toughs gathered in camps in the woods and rumors of intended raids on the town were frequent. The law-abiding citizen got out and oiled his revolver and became an actual menace to his neighbor.

The police force showed unwonted activity and the oil lamps were allowed to burn all night, instead of only until eleven P.M., the normal retiring hour.

The police force of those days was unique. It combined inefficiency with charity. There were two members, both cripples, who patrolled the town together, during the perilous days of "hop picking." One of them had one leg and two arms, and carried a lantern—the other had two legs and one arm and carried a club. However, they proved ample protection against the raids which never came off. Many a time has the writer, with his companions, listened to the tales of adventure of this patrol, told on a street corner by the dim light of their lantern.

Hop City vanished with the passing of the hop. Its buildings lined the river road from the Fly Creek road to that to Phoenix. It was on the land of "Jimmy" Clark—perhaps the largest hop grower in the neighborhood. He had well over a hundred acres in his yards

and employed between six and seven hundred city pickers. They had to be housed and fed and taken care of. To meet this demand, Hop City grew up. It had its jail, its court room, its restaurants and, of course, its dwellings. Jimmy organized a rough and ready municipal government. Justice was administered and order maintained by selected members of as tough a community as ever collected anywhere.

The great weapon of government was the retention of the pickers' pay until the season was over, and they themselves actually on the special train for home. Then when the train started the pay was distributed. The pickers were more attracted by the life in the country and the gayeties of the season than by the money earned. Everything was furnished them—transportation, food, housing, and amusements. Those were dark days for the housewives of Cooperstown as all the "help" insisted on the privilege of going "hop-picking."

Then the change came; it was found that inferior hops could be grown on the Pacific Coast and elsewhere. Our Otsego growers were undersold and gradually the hop industry shrank; the growers failed and the yards were plowed up. Farms, which in the writer's youth changed hands readily at twenty-five thousand dollars, now fail of a buyer at five. Notwithstanding its speculative character, the days when "Hops were King"



were the Golden Age of Otsego County and Cooperstown. With the collapse came poverty to many—farms were abandoned and money loaned on them was lost.

Cooperstown had its land boom in the seventies, when it was really a great summer resort; prices soared and the tale ran that "Josh" Storey went up one side of a street and Frederick Phinney up the other buying everything at the seller's price.

The town was crowded with summer guests, and the lake with boats. All the desirable spots along the river bank were labeled: "Lovers' Retreat," "Calypso's Bower," "Shady Nook," and similar signs attracted the idle pleasure seeker.

One case of typhoid fever following a stay at the principal hotel punctured this bubble. More money was lost. Then began the gradual development of the town and country along the lines which have brought them the prosperity they now enjoy.

The various histories of the town are filled with anecdotes of its more distinguished visitors and residents, and to them the reader is referred with the hope that these sketches may have excited sufficient interest to induce him to delve farther into our local history and traditions, and perhaps even search for himself among the musty and yellowed documents and letters, now laid aside, but once such a real part of someone's life.

## A GREAT HIGHWAY

THE earliest highways followed the important streams; partly because of the easy grade, but principally because the first settlements were on the rivers. When the land lying away from the streams began to be settled, the new towns were reached by short roads running back to them from the nearest river. In this way the settlements on Otsego Lake first were reached by a road from the Mohawk to the head of the lake, near Hyde Hall, and then by boat down the lake. In 1790 the road from East Springfield to Cooperstown was built down the east side of the lake and at about the same time, or a little later, the road to Cherry Valley was made. It is likely that there were very rough wood roads in use on the line of many of the present routes before real roads were opened.

When traffic justified it, about 1798, the Second Great Western Turnpike, so called, was built. It ran west from Albany, paralleling the Mohawk Highway, and linking together by one great road the various settlements along the ridge between the Mohawk and the Catskills; among them Duanesburg, Esperance,

Sloansville, Carlisle, Sharon, Sharon Springs, Cherry Valley, the Springfields, Richfield, and so on to Syracuse.

The route is a beautiful one; following the top of the ridge until it sinks into the sand plains west of Albany. The views are wonderful in places; the most celebrated is between Cherry Valley and Sharon where the whole Mohawk Valley lies spread out under the eyes of the traveler, hemmed in by the distant Adirondacks.

It is hard for us to realize that the building and opening of a great highway, a century and a quarter ago, was as important an event as the building of a railroad or great canal is to-day, perhaps even more so, as roads were few then.

As first planned, it was to run "westward from the house where John Weaver now lives in the town of Watervliet to the house where John Walton now lives in the town of Cherry Valley"; the toll gates were to be at intervals of ten miles and everything that moved was to pay toll, except churchgoers on their way to and from public worship and persons going to or from any mill; those in search of spiritual or physical food were not taxed. The immediate purpose of the incorporation of the highway was to raise funds for the rebuilding of the bridge over the Schoharie-kill at Esperance which had been carried away by the ice in the Spring of 1798. Later the road came east to Snipe Street in Albany and west to Syracuse.

This road was built by the corporation and a good deal of the stock went to pay the builders. Judge Cooper built six miles and was paid in stock. I do not know its value then, but in 1802, Jeremiah Van Rensselaer paid \$1250 cash for fifty shares. Its par value was forty dollars in 1799, and was later increased to seventy and then to ninety. When the tolls collected amounted to sufficient to repay the cost of the road the corporation was to be dissolved and the road itself revert to the people of the State. This day never arrived, but some years ago the road was abandoned by the Company and thus returned to the State.

When the road was finally finished and opened to travel, the enthusiasm of its owners was great; they had visions of tremendous earnings and began to make plans for spending them; the bridges were all to be of stone, and one enthusiast planned lighting the highway. His optimism can be appreciated when we remember that light in those days was supplied by whale oil lamps and tallow dips. It makes one's head swim to calculate the number of either required per mile. Just east of the Fort Plain road crossing there is still a stone arch over a stream; the only stone bridge between Albany and Richfield Springs.

Wild as these dreams were, traffic seemed to justify them for a time; wagons poured into Albany, with all the products of the western land, in a continuous stream,



and returned loaded with the requirements of the settlers which their own neighborhood did not supply. Great droves of cattle and sheep followed one another into the city; some of them containing over five hundred head.

It was the boast of the stockholders that there was a tavern for every mile of the road. This boast at least was true, for a few years ago, I was told by the aged daughter of the keeper of the last of the taverns at Carlisle, that between that town and Albany, a distance of thirty-six miles, there had been thirty-seven taverns.

Her account of the travel over the road when at the height of its glory, as told to her by her father, was most interesting; twenty stages with six horses each passed the tavern daily; ten each way; the loaded wagons traveled in fleets often as many as twenty-five or thirty in company. In the little town of Carlisle there were then four hotels, of which but one remains. When I last passed it there was plainly visible in the colored glass window over the main door, a clean-cut hole about as big as a quarter; this my informant called my attention to and explained as follows:

In the old stage coach days, one morning, an old and expert driver drew up in front of the door with his six horses, and while waiting for his passengers, he had a whip with a long lash with a knot on the end of it, he gave it a couple of twirls above his head, and then a crack, and the

knot on the end of the lash cut that hole in the glass, as keen as a bullet and never cracked the glass at all.

I have the account kept by Judge Cooper with one of the wagons and teams which passed wearily back and forth over this crowded highway. The wagons, like the stages, had names. This one was called "Columbus" and the account is headed "Collumbus the wagon in account with Wm. Cooper"; it cost \$800.00 on Oct. 28, 1801; it was driven by Michael, whose great coat and stockings cost \$5.00; then follows a detailed account of its loads, earnings, and expenses. On November 5th it brought a load weighing "37 hundred" at 6/ a hundred, \$25.25; on November 14 it brought a "cask of wine, Pipe of Brandy & Hogshead of rum for 27.75." Sometimes the Columbus carried a small load and sometimes "Returned empty," but generally a load averaged about twenty-five dollars, and the trip seems to have taken three or four days each way. On Aug. 31, 1802, is entered: "Return load a Tomb Stone," and as no charge is made, it is probable that this was the stone which still marks the spot by the road side where Hannah Cooper was killed, on its way from Philadelphia to Morris.

Occasionally another wagon described as the "Old Smashpipe" is mentioned. Perhaps it was such a rough rider that the driver's pipe was smashed between his teeth.

The heyday of the turnpike's prosperity as a great broad highway ended with the opening of the canal and the building of the Mohawk and Hudson railroad from Albany to Schenectady; the former diverted much freight and some passenger travel and the latter a great many of the passengers of the coaches; but for some years travel continued by stage and private conveyance to the then popular resorts of Sharon and Richfield Springs; however, the road was neglected; the popularity of Sharon faded; the farms and taverns along the wayside were abandoned, and the old road became almost impassable between Sharon Springs and Albany. Little is left to indicate its past glory to the traveler who takes his springs, if not his life, in his hands and drives over it to-day. The busy throngs of men, wagons, and beasts have disappeared, and with them nearly all the taverns; at Carlisle, Sloansville, and Esperance still are interesting old inns standing and open, and at Springfield is one long closed. Here and there along the right of way is a beautiful house, occupied, and more frequently an abandoned one, or the cellar which marks the site of some old building.

For miles the broad overgrown right of way runs through deserted lands, lined by falling walls, and unmarked by even a telegraph pole. Everywhere, however, is beauty, and from the time that the road rises from the sand plains of Albany, a lover of nature, and of

history, can find few more unusual and interesting trips; straight as an arrow it runs to the west; only at Esperance it turns sharply to the right to cross the Schoharie Creek on a wonderful old enclosed bridge, which must have many years over a century to its credit.

Esperance itself is beautiful: its Common; its old inn; its interesting buildings, stone church, and great overhanging elms distinguish it from the run of villages. Sloansville and Carlisle with their taverns and colonial houses well repay a visit, as do many of the small hamlets.

At Sharon Springs is the great Pavilion Hotel, nearly a century old, with its long colonnade overlooking the Mohawk Valley; it is a dignified survivor of other days and other manners. For many years it was, perhaps, the best known resort in the State of New York and one of the most celebrated in the country. Its "gallery" was crowded with politicians and prominent men and women; the former in white duck trousers and black coats and the latter in hoop skirts. At evening the rows of chairs, four in number, ran from end to end of the piazza, and while the occupants discussed politics, news, horses, and wine, they looked out over a wonderful expanse of hill and valley; the parlors, brilliantly lighted by kerosene lamps and candles, were filled with dancers. During the day they drove, rode, flirted, bathed, and



drank—mineral and fire water. It is hard to realize that there was no golf or tennis, and only the beginnings even of croquet, in those days to make summer life interesting and wholesome.

Parts of the old road have been rebuilt recently, and in time it may be restored its entire length. If it can be saved from the vandalism of the State road contractor and turned into a stone and gravel way it will again become popular as the most beautiful route west from Albany, and, as it always has been, the shortest to many of our interior towns. When the time comes that the motorist thinks of something more than speed and distance the remaining old taverns may once more be filled with guests and the "Ford" and its kindred take the place of the "coaches and six," "Collumbus, the wagon," "Old Smashpipe," and their long forgotten companions.

Beyond Sharon is Cherry Valley with its memories of Brant and Butler and the victims of the massacre; then come all the Springfields: East, Middle Village, Center, and Springfield proper. The latter, too, was raided and burned by the Indians, and has all the appearance of never having recovered from the shock.

Here we turn south for our own village, and the Second Great Western Turnpike goes on its way west—out of our story.

## A LOST ATMOSPHERE

ELECTRIC lights, concrete pavements, and new women are destructive of that indescribable something called atmosphere; and probably also it is too intangible to appeal to our modern ideas and tastes.

Whatever the cause may be, it has gone from our village, except where it lingers in certain neighborhoods: the old Presbyterian and Episcopal churches with their graveyards; along River Street and about the corners of the town, where modern improvements and new ideas have failed to dislodge it. In my youth when the streets were lined with great overhanging trees; paved with boards; lighted by oil lamps, or not at all, and filled with a friendly and leisurely population, times were different and, in some ways, more livable.

We still have our churchyards, with the narrow way leading from Pioneer Street to River Street, along the Presbyterian and Episcopal churches and through their burying grounds. Even they, however, have felt the touch of the vandal, for years ago the heavy hand

of the improver was laid on Christ Churchyard when, to the horror of many, the leaning and irregular grave stones were set up in straight and erect lines without reference to the location of the dead, whose virtues they proclaim, and without distinction of sex or degree. It is to be hoped that when the last trump sounds the resurrected will not have to rely on their grave stones for identification.

The people, against the background of beauty and quiet, were the real creators of the wonderful old-time atmosphere of the place; they were kindly, individual, and interesting. Down near Frog Hollow lived in a little house two maidens of doubtful age, always known as the "P—— girls." They were helped in their daily tasks by a devoted maid, who was more like a member of the family than a servant; they kept their pets; canaries and white fan-tailed pigeons, and cats; but nothing as aggressive as dogs. Deeply religious and interested in all church work they had a lurking love of the occult and more than half believed in the card fortunes which they told for the youth of the town, in darkened room and with lowered voice. The pigeons seemed to them sacred and typical of purity. When one of the canaries escaped they posted the following notice on the bulletin board in the post office where lost and found articles were recorded:

## LOST

A yellow Canary—Flew  
towards Roman Catholic  
Church—Please return to  
(A Great Pet) Miss H. P.

92 Pioneer St.

The event of the year for them, next to Christmas and Easter, was a ten-day trip to visit relatives near a large city. This was the only break in the peaceful monotony of their lives and was the treat of well-to-do relatives.

Their means were most limited, but they never complained and always had enough to help the poor and the less fortunate and to send some delicacy to the ill and suffering. Life for them seemed hard and difficult, to hold little of pleasure and much of hardship, but they were always cheerful, hopeful, and interested.

On Main Street, at the same time, were three cabinet makers, all old, all masters of their trade and devoted to one another. The shop was old, as was much of the contents. Unfinished work accumulated; cobwebs softened every corner and angle; shavings and sawdust covered the floor. In all this litter of disorder, they worked on and did the best of cabinet making. They were of quick movement and silent tongue, but of slow accomplishment. With years they grew to look alike; their backs developed the same stoop; their



voices the same tones and they knew one another's thoughts without speaking. Each year the mountain of unfinished work grew before them, but no one was discouraged by it, except the owners. In appearance they seemed about the age of Methuselah, with the exception of the youngest, the son of one of them, who was in his sixties, and who always was spoken of affectionately as "The boy." One by one death claimed them, but even he didn't hurry about his task, and when the last went and the great pile of unfinished work was looked over and claimants sought for it, many a long-forgotten piece of furniture was found by its owner, and many an owner was found to have been long in the graveyard.

In those days the doctors and the lawyers were marked men, and went about their tasks deliberately, in long black coats and black silk stocks wound about long necks, for they were all tall and thin except one lawyer who violated custom by being very tall and very fat. They never hurried and never forgot the dignity of their occupation. In fact no one hurried. In the evening when the mail arrived, every one sauntered to the post office to await its distribution. Old and young were there; the news was discussed and plans made for the next day. Joy and sorrow came generally by mail.

The only event which could arouse the town was a fire; then it went mad. The firemen fought one an-

other rather than the fire and the townspeople in their misdirected zeal destroyed what the fire spared. I have often admired the foresight of my great grandmother who once, when the Hall caught fire, ordered all the doors and windows locked and bolted, told the servants to put out the fire, while she would take care of the fire department; this she did by pouring boiling water on those who tried to enter the house.

When the cry of fire was heard every one dropped his task or occupation and "hooked on" to the passing hand-drawn, hand-pumped engines or ran regularly with "The Phinney Hose" or "Deluge No. 1" or "Niagara No. 2." I remember one joyous occasion when we, being young and sound of wind, ran away with "Deluge No. 1" and arrived at the fire with the engine and no firemen. Pumping did not appeal to the young, as running did, and was incomparably less interesting than saving furniture from fire by breaking it. When the Central Hotel burned, one night years ago, the vantage post at the top of a ladder was seized by a "Deluge" man, which of course, was intolerable to the other firemen and "Niagara" and "Phinney Hose" were turned on him until he was drowned from his position—while the hotel burned. Next to the small boy the pugnacious and jealous fireman was the fire's best friend.

There were other red-letter days than those marked

by fire; real holidays, when no one worked. Among these was the day of the "Scottish Games." There were three enthusiastic Scots in the village and one full highland suit; this was worn by a very dearly beloved doctor of distinguished Scotch descent, while the other two wore "pants" made of Scotch plaid, and wonderful to look upon. I recall another pair of holiday "pants" made for a boy friend out of two American flags with the Unions forming the seat. On this day all the youth of the town were Scotch, and most of their elders discovered a latent Caledonian strain. Always a piper was imported and generally an athlete or two. The taber was tossed, races run, and all kinds of games indulged in at the fair grounds; while the piper marched back and forth, blowing the pipes for dear life, with that faraway look in his eye which a piper always has, and which suggests that his "Heart is in the Highlands"—and he looking for it.

The Sunday School picnics were great occasions too, and there were always a few picnics at Three Mile Point, for old and young, when the latter danced to the music of old Joe Tom.

The elderly residents had their literary and debating societies where papers were read and the merits of Shakespeare and others discussed.

The town had its mysteries which lost nothing by discussion. For one whole summer, at sunset, a cornet

was heard, played beautifully from the woods on the east side of the lake. The secret of the musician's identity was so well kept that to this day it is unknown. All the town gathered to hear the notes, sweetened by distance and the lake.

Years ago an English gentleman suddenly appeared and either bought or rented Brookwood Point, furnished it, and disappeared for a time to return with a beautiful woman. He called her his wife. They discouraged all intimacy with the townspeople and lived much alone, until one day they were gone. The furniture was sold at auction and from the sale came the beautiful flat tea pot which belonged to my mother, which is still in the family. The name the man went by was Captain Daniels and the tea pot bears a much worn crest. Rumor had it that he was an English army officer who had run away with another man's wife. Whence they came and where they went are alike unknown.

When I was a boy, a deformed deaf mute appeared, with a heavy chest, which he put in one of the bank vaults, declaring it to contain gold. When the lid was lifted, surely enough, it seemed full of gold coin. He carried a tablet upon which all conversation was written, and pretended to be looking for a country place. He almost bought Brookwood Point from Elihu Phinney, whose country home it was, for seventy-five



thousand dollars. Then, suddenly, he vanished. He turned out to be neither deaf nor dumb, but a fugitive from justice, and when his chest was examined by the authorities, a layer of gold, or imitation gold, coins was found on the top and the bottom filled with old iron. We never knew what he wanted or where he went. It was shrewdly suspected that he had planned robbing one of the banks.

The air of the town has suffered sadly from the somewhat indiscriminate pulling down of old colonial buildings, and the advent of the scroll saw Victorian product. Between the old stone bank on Main Street and the Adam house of the Worthingtons was a row of low and interesting dwellings, worthy of preservation; opposite the grave of the Indian Chief on River Street was a Colonial house, with a broad flight of steps to the front door, surmounted by the usual portico; on the lot near Otsego Rock was a Gothic Cottage, which was burned. The old Rectory, too, was an attractive white Colonial building and along River Street were several others now, like their inmates, gone.

The auction was a great function in those days; there were not many of them, but when they came they were real social events; the town went. The sales were held on the lawns and Cooperstown society sat about and bid languidly on the belongings of their dead or unfortunate friends. An adjournment was had for

dinner. It was the time of bargains, and I remember a perfect and beautiful Colonial looking-glass with a picture across the top being knocked down for twenty-five cents. There were heart burnings over bargains lost but, on the whole, the auction was quite as successful a social event as a party or a picnic and from the boy's point of view more fun than either. Many a piece of furniture now in the older houses of the village has a record of numerous auctions, and to the old resident its history would be well known, and perhaps its appearance at another auction eagerly awaited.

Sunday was strictly observed; no one sailed or rowed on the lake, and all games were forbidden; it was a sacred but terrible day, as long as all the rest of the week, and to make it worse a cold lunch took the place of dinner. Church and Sunday School over, and a cold and inadequate lunch eaten at one o'clock, the entire town spent a cheerful afternoon walking to the cemetery and back. A hurried and cold supper followed and then evening service. I remember how heartily I sympathized with the little boy who burst into tears when told that if he was very good, when he died he would go to heaven, where it always was Sunday.

The very hotels were different: where the Fenimore is now was the St. James, a dignified white frame building with a classical portico and high steps leading to it. Nearly opposite was the Central Hotel, also with a

classical portico covering the entire front and reaching from the ground to the roof. When I was a boy of less than seven I always got up in the morning by the gong of a hotel which stood where the library does now and which was called, I think, the Red Lion. It burned down and was succeeded by an immense brick hotel which never was finished, and which for years was called the Skeleton Hotel. Finally it was pulled down as unsafe. It was a terrible place to pass after dark—as it was full of ghosts.

There were no steamboats on the lake, only sail boats, row boats, and large scows. The chug-chug of the restless motor boat was of course undreamed of; all was serenity and beauty. The lake front was not disfigured by the present row of boat houses and work shops. Great rafts of pine logs were floated down the lake and river to the dam where they supplied the sawmill. The gristmill stood about where the water-works building is now; the sawmill just west of the east bridge, and between them the cider mill and a small one for planing. This was the manufacturing suburb of the town and a great playground. The mills were full of interest; but the greatest pleasure was running on the logs which filled the mill pond from bank to bank and ran far up the river. It had just that spice of danger which appeals to boys; one had to keep moving or the logs rolled over and a ducking followed; many

is the time I have slipped through into the river and dried out in the sun.

Perhaps the "Cooper girls" for years contributed as much to the atmosphere of the place as any single household; they were the "Cooper girls" in the early part of the nineteenth century, and the "Cooper girls" they were affectionately called until the end, which came for them well on toward the latter part of that century. As children some of them left here about 1817; as young women they returned about 1833, to fill out their allotted years. They were my four aunts; two of them married and one lived for a time in another village but returned here as a widow to join her two maiden sisters and her third, already a widow. During the most formative period of their lives they lived in New York and Europe; they saw the most distinguished social life of many of the great European cities and were educated there with all the care and thoroughness of that day, and in all its small accomplishments; and then returned to the somewhat provincial life of this little village in central New York. The contrast, great now, was greater then, but they found no fault with their lot, and if they had longings for greater things and heart burnings for the glories which they had known, they never spoke of them. One of them, Susan, wrote a number of books; another, Charlotte, consoled herself with her music and her



garden, and the other two had their children to educate and care for. They were far from rich, hardly well-to-do, and after the Hall was sold, they lived in a little Gothic cottage, built for them on the banks of the Susquehanna out of brick from their old home which had burned. Good works took much of their time and the eldest, Susan, who founded the hospital and named it "Thanksgiving," in gratitude for the end of the Civil War, was looked upon almost as a saint; she started the Orphanage and numerous other charitable institutions.

They never gossiped, they never spoke unkindly of, or crossly to, anyone; they looked for and found the humorous and beautiful in life, and in their surroundings; no doubt they lived much in the memory of the past and in the interests acquired by travel in those early years. Aunt Charlotte loved flowers and had a garden which she tended with devoted care; as she grew older and feebler the garden shrank until when the end came there were but two sparsely covered beds close to the house. Her death was tragic; when her beloved sister, Susan, had a stroke of paralysis and was lying unconscious, the shock to her was terrible, and she crept quietly off to her room, lay down on her bed, and died unattended.

They entertained in a small but most delightful way, always having the best of food. I spent many summers under their roof, and must have been a trying guest—a

small boy in such a household; but I never was spoken to unkindly, although I remember deserving it many a time. Meals were served with great formality and always began with "Grace" and ended with "Thanks returned." This seemed superfluous to my young eagerness to be off and at play; as did the formal sitting about the table for some time after dessert had been eaten. This monotony often was relieved, however, by an amusing incident; they were all deaf, some of them very much so, and it occasionally happened that one would return thanks, not to be heard by the others, and after a little another would perform the same ceremony, much to my irreverent joy. Theirs was not the only household of its kind in the village in those days; it was typical merely and perhaps the most pronounced in its peculiarities, its history, and its habits.

There was another delightful household of which a one-time village wit said, not unkindly, that they had "mice blood" in them; they were afraid of cats and loved to sit close up in corners.

The world is small and strange things happen. My first lawsuit, just before I was admitted to the Bar, was over some bank books which had been stolen from one of two very old women, living down town in Albany. I won the case and one of my old clients told me that when she was a little girl she lived in Cooperstown, where one day in playing she fell into the mill

pond; she was alone and would have been drowned if it had not been for a man passing on horseback who dismounted and rescued her; that man, she said, was Judge Cooper. It all must have happened before 1809, the year Judge Cooper died. The reward for his act was long deferred as I, his great-grandson, got eighty dollars for trying the case in the year 1880. It always suggested to my mind casting one's bread upon the waters and having it return after many days. Four generations is some time to wait for the return.

But to go back to the people; there was one little old lady who deserved a Thackeray to immortalize her. In her youth she had been a great beauty, and in fact never lost her looks. She lived near Cooperstown when first married, and although for years a wanderer over the earth, she finally returned each summer to her old home. She had all the charm of the woman of the world that she was; a charm which never grew old; a manner which always was gracious; a wit and conversational ability which were vouchsafed to few favored mortals. She never lost her interest in life and people, or her love of gay clothes and bright colors; in appearance she was a typical fairy godmother of the early Victorian age; she was always a welcome guest, and was as much sought by the young as by the middle aged and by her few contemporaries.

When she came to town, attired in the style and

colors which prevailed in her early twenties, it was in a Victoria, of about her own age, drawn by horses which must have been colts when she was young, and driven by a coachman who personified all that was fat, red-faced, and dignified of his occupation; his livery was of the kind which "fitted too soon" and was drawn in deep creases about him. He never failed to properly celebrate a visit to the village; so when the home journey began, he drove his mistress into the shadows of the lake road with an unsteady hand and a most beatific smile.



## SOME OLD LETTERS

I HAVE selected from a great mass of letters the following, as throwing some light on life at Cooperstown in the early days of the settlement; there was a constantly changing and most interesting social life, quite remarkable when we remember the remoteness of the village and its inaccessibility. The family life at Judge Cooper's home seems to have been most delightful, and the strangers within the village gates evidently grew to love the place and the people residing there.

William Cooper to Stephen Van Rensselaer:

Cooperstown May the 2, 1792.

MY MUCH ESTM<sup>d</sup> AND }  
HIGHLY PRIS<sup>d</sup> FRIEND }

After giving detailed reports of an election this letter goes on.

I am preparing to illuminate as well the town as the lake on which we shall raise Bonfires on Platforms, cannonading, musick, Horns & Conche Shells; turn out all the wine in my cellar &c. on Jays Election. Huza for our side at last—but if Clinton succeeds, I must hang up my fiddle. You alarm me about McComb, Morris & Bingham. I hope Constable

is not in the scrape, nor Carlisle Pollock. I, like the rest of the Human Race, hope that they will hold out until I shall not be so deeply interested for their welfare. Adieu, my dear friend, Adieu, with all Possible Cordiality and Friendship, once more Adieu.

WILLIAM COOPER.

Honorable S. V. Rensselaer, Esq.,  
Albany.

Judge Cooper seems to have been very fond of S. V. Rensselaer; in closing a letter dated October 7, 1792, he says,

Remember that I profess to be a man of business and expect to have my letters answered. I know that you are taking up with objects more interesting than that of writing to me, but my good Friend, there is nothing that makes one man feel so bold in calling the attention of another as that of knowing that he has an honest and sincere friendship for him, in which business you will do me the justice to believe that there is none that holds your welfare in higher estimation than myself, this is the first declaration that I have made on that subject, and shall in future desist from Protestations, supposing you always take it for granted—friendship being a chain that never wants rubbing in direct terms to keep it bright.

Adieu,

WILLIAM COOPER.

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Jacob Le Ray

New York, Dec. 7, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR:

You will find enclosed two Bank notes of ten Dollars each, which you will be good enough to keep until called for

by a stranger. They are not a gift of my own, but were handed me for this purpose, and intended to relieve the wants of an elderly French Gentleman *of consequence*, whose name I dare not reveal at present and who perhaps will call on you to receive them in which case you will shew him every civility in your power.

Sincerely yours

JACOB LE RAY.

Endorsed

13th Dec. delivered to Mr. P. the 20 dollars on his producing a letter from the Gentleman who sent them. Mr. P. promised to forward them to the unknown person intended.

I have no idea who the mysterious Frenchman could have been; undoubtedly a refugee and one in very straightened circumstances if twenty dollars could be of such importance. The country was full of exiled Frenchmen at the time, among them Talleyrand who visited Judge Cooper and wrote his daughter Hannah the following acrostic:

Aimable philosophe an printemps de son âge,  
 Ni les temps, ni les lieux n'alterent son esprit;  
 Ne cèdent qu' à ses goûts simples et same étalage,  
 Au milieu des deserts, elle lit, pense, écrit.

Cultivez, bella Anna, votre goût pour l'étude;  
 On ne saurait ici mieux employer son temps;  
 Otsego n'est pas gai-mais, tout est habitude;  
 Paris vous déplairait fort au premier moment;  
 Et qui jouit de soi dans une solitude,  
 Rentrant au monde, est sûr d'en faire l'ornement.

Arthur Noble, who wrote the next letter, was an English gentleman and was largely interested in frontier lands. He owned two patents north of us, known as Arthurboro and Nobleboro, each of thirty thousand acres. Fort Noble was his town. It never prospered and its site now is marked only by a building or two.

Great expectations were built on "sugar and rum from the maple tree" in those days. They too, were unfulfilled, but every effort was made to develop this business. Among the old papers of Judge Cooper's is an agreement signed by a long list of public-spirited citizens by which each agrees to purchase and consume a stated amount of maple sugar annually for a term of years; nothing is said of the "rum." Perhaps an agreement was not necessary as to this.

Conajohary, May 7th, 1791.

DEAR COOPER,

I left the sugar and Spirits in Charge with our Friend Dr Rush to be delivered to the President on his return from the Southward, which they expect will be in the Middle of June. Dr Rush thinks the properest way to address him will be thus—Mr Cooper and Mr Noble present their respects to the President of the United States, and request his Acceptance of Samples of Sugar and Spirits produced from the Maple tree with their Observation etc.—I am sure he will word it so as to give you Satisfaction, I am on my road to Fort Noble, where I shall expect to see your Honor about the 20th. Inst.—, and request you will bring Hargrove with you. I spent two days very agreeably in



Albany, one with the Patroon the other with Gansy we did not forget you. Danby swears like a trooper if you forget to send her the Maple Sugar she will torment you all the days of your life Dr Rush sent his Son to Penningtons for the four Loaves of White Maple Sugar, but he had Disposed of every Ounce of it. I have been bragging what a Quantity you would bring to Market this year. I hope you will not be disappointed by your Yankees, the Chancellor has quite failed in his Experiments he says he will lose 100 Pounds by it, his People told him it was a very bad year and the trees would not run. Rush brought me to Mr Jefferson the Secretary of State, he is as Sanguine as you or I about the Maple Sugar, he thinks in a few years we shall be able to Supply half the World, he read me a Paragraph out of a letter from France, to tell him there is a house in Amsterdam going to Send to this Country to set up works for the Manufacturing of Maple Sugar.

With best wishes for your Family and Mr Smith Believe Me Dear Cooper

Your truly Sincere Friend  
ARTHUR NOBLE.

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The following letter is interesting as showing the method of sale and settlement of land adopted by Judge Cooper. He followed it consistently and it may have been the reason of his success as a maker of settlements, in part at least.

The other method, adopted by many land owners at the time, was to lease the land in fee, requiring the tenant to pay perpetually an annual rental. It was

this latter form of conveyance which led to the anti-rent agitation and the so-called war.

Cooperstown, 7 Mo 3rd 1790.

Esteemed Friend

Charles J. Evans.

Thy letter of the 13th of April (informing of one wrote some months ago and forwarded to my House in Jersey) came to hand this day; it had reached my House some time ago but my being from home caused it to be sent with others after me, and missing me has only just come to hand now. My Mode of selling Lands both those that belong to myself and those that belong to my Friends, is to allow the Purchaser a credit of Ten Years for the Purchase Money giving him a Warrantee Deed and taking a Mortgage with Bond and Warrant carrying legal Interest. This I have found by experience to be the only way to raise our back Lands from a nominal to a lively Estate—as the Purchaser when he holds the Soil in fee sees a probability of making it his own, he therefore builds better Houses Barns and other Buildings clears his Lands in a better and more effectual manner attends to planting Orchards, and in fact looks up as a Man on record with more ambition than he that is settled on any other plan ever yet practised.

I did not think of taking any more under my care yet awhile having just got through with three hundred thousand Acres, but if those Lands are good I will strive to sell them for thee for the following Comission. For all the Bonds and Mortgages I hand thee regularly acknowledged and recorded I must be allowed Five per Cent on the Sum so delivered one fourth in advance one Fourth when the Business is compleated or such part of it as I from time to time may get through with, the remainder I will collect

from the Tenants or Purchasers whom I sell to—if those Terms should meet thy approbation inform me by a Line directed to the care of Glen & Bleecker's Merchants Albany. There must be also a power of Attorney proved before one of the Judges of the Supreme Court or one of the Masters in Chancery in order that it may be recorded in the County where the Lands lie, an exact survey of the Lands must likewise be sent. Thee must also prepare Blank Deeds Bonds and Martgages for my purposes which is all the expence thee will be at in this business save that of the commission aforementioned.

With due Respect I am  
thy real Friend  
WILLIAM COOPER.

(Endorsed:)

To the care of  
Ludlow & Goold,  
Wall Street,  
for the Post.

Charles J. Evans,  
New York.

Ph. Schuyler to Wm. Cooper

Albany May 7th 1792

DEAR SIR:—

Your favor of the 24th ult. I had the pleasure to receive last evening. Its communications are infinitely agreeable and the result of the poles as you state, such as will give us the victory, unless our friends in other quarters err egregiously in their calculations,—

Whether we succeed or not, we shall be much indebted to your exertions. Stephen too has done his best, and I have not been Idle and we are advised that Mr. Jacob Morris has evinced himself a true friend to the good cause— The

patroon has been rebuked for not writing you but he pleads not guilty,—and puts himself on his tryal,—

I was in hopes to have had the pleasure of visiting you, but Mrs Rensselaer's indisposition obliges me to attend her to New York. If I am home when the canvassing closes, and If It turns out as we wish I will express a messenger express to you,— If otherwise bad news flies fast enough—

I believe fasting and prayer to be good but If you had only fasted and prayed I am certain we should not have had seven hundred votes from your country—reports say, that you was civil to the young and handsome of the sex, that you flattered the old & ugly.—and even embraced the toothless and decrepit, in order to obtain votes—when will you write a treatise on Electioneering? whenever you do afford only a few copies to your friends—

Adieu, I am very sincerely

Dear Saint William,

Yours &c

PH. SCHUYLER.

Mr. Judge Cooper

(Addressed)

To—William Cooper Esq.,

First Judge of the Court of Commonpleas  
in the County of Otsego  
at Cooperstown.

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W. Cooper to B. Gilbert

Cooperstown, 8 of March 1794.

Hudson hath returned from Albany—reports that no alteration in the officers of the Pleas or Peace will take place—that he hath assurances that no agreement was made



in the council to adopt our List. General Schuyler and O Hoffman, both informed me that they had agreed and that it was a settled thing and as from them I reported it here, if it is not the case I am in a very awkward situation, however to put myself out of the way of mortification—I have come to the determination—never to sit with Hudson, Harper, Culley or Cannon again—for to be obliged to sign bills of Exception at every Court on account of their ignorance or wickedness I will not—not to mention their total want of respectability—besides I treat no man that I profess friendship for with indifference—nor can I bear the neglect of an alteration so loudly called for from a people who have a right to demand it—therefore if you find the appointments not like to take place, hand in the inclosed to the Council of Appointment, if you find that they certainly will, then keep it and hand it me again—but if otherwise do not neglect it. As to the lock if there is any opposition let it be, for I am confident the public must and will do it—shortly—however—make a motion for £50 to build a bridge across the Susquehannah at the end of the State road.

Yours sincerely

WILLIAM COOPER.

Benjamin Gilbert.

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(Enclosure.)

GENTLEMEN

The Almost constant intoxication, extreme ignorance and total want of respectability of a Majority of the Judges and Assistant Justices with whom I have to associate in the Courts of Justice for the County of Otsego renders it absolutely necessary that I should resign the office of first Judge of the County aforesaid, as well to bare a Testimony against such undignified carrectors as also to avoid the

mortification of being obliged to sign bills of exception with them at every Court. I cannot readily think of any Person fit for the office that I can recommend to so painful a situation, therefore not doubting but your honorable Board will make the best provision for the respectability of the county in your Power, I do hereby resign and deliver up to you the honor and trust reposed in me by Virtue of a commission under the Great Seal of the State bearing date 17th of February, 1791 nominating and commissioning me to act as first Judge of the County aforesaid.

With due respect I remain

WILLIAM COOPER

The Honorable Council of Appointment  
of the State of New York

As two copies of the resignation are with the letter, the new appointments must have been made. The picture of frontier justice is not a pleasant one.

It is evident from the following letter that in "Hudson" Judge Cooper found a foeman worthy of his steel.

New York 21 Jany. 1793.

Two petitions signed by Ephraim Hudson and about 70 other persons setting forth that you as first Judge of Otsego had been guilty of mal & corrupt conduct and sundry misdemeanors in the execution of your office, was this day read in the house, after which I immediately rose and declared that I viewed it as a false scandalous & malicious libel and moved that they might be ordered to lay on the table, however numbers prevailed and they were committed to a committee of the whole to be taken up next wednesday with a Resolution moved also to day by a Mr. Curtis to an enquiry into your conduct.

It being the latter end of the sessions I think there is little danger that the business will be fully gone into at the present however, if it remains over its an unpleasant thing—some of those fellows would go to the devil to ruin you, however walk straight and be firm and you have nothing to fear

I expect you & Talbot will have a pretty tight race for Congress

As the Post does not go 'till Thursday morning shall not close this unless a direct private conveyance offers 'till Wednesday evening & will inform you what the house may do that day

Wednesday 23d January 1793

Question was this day taken upon a postponment of Mr. Curtiss resolution 'till the next session and lost, then the house agreed to the resolution, and the sergeant at Arms is to be sent to Otsego for witnesses by whom I shall send you a copy of the petition, the signers names &c and copy of the resolution agreed to

Yours truly &c

JACOB MORRIS.

P. S.

My business will absolutely require me to be home before this business comes on.

Judge Cooper.

(Addressed)

Honorable William Cooper Esquire  
Cooperstown

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Rufus King to Judge Cooper

Philadelphia 10 March 1794

DEAR SIR,

I ought sooner to have replied to your Letters respecting the land sold to you when you was last in New York—I view the subject in the same light that you do, and consider

the Bargain to have been then concluded— Mr. Kent has drawn the Deeds &c. which are ready for execution— Had I seen Mr. Smith I should have proposed to him to have taken the mortgage in order to have had it executed, recorded and returned—

I was very much gratified with the proceedings of the Assembly on your subject; justice has been rendered to you, and mortification inflicted upon your adversaries.—We have before us again the subject of post Roads, and have inserted in the Bill a road to Cooperstown in Otsego, branching from the Mohawk, and passing through Cherry Valley—

As post roads are bestowed very freely at the request of our southern friends; if you have in view any extension of the Post, in your Quarter, which by facilitating the communication of information, would accommodate any considerable number of People, I desire you to give me early, and particular, information, that I may be able to propose the addition when the Bill shall come before the Senate— We have nothing of a public nature, which the News Papers do not communicate—one great effort is to preserve the peace of the Country, tho some late proceedings of the British in the West Indies, if they shall be authorized, will prove extremely embarrassing—

Our last accounts assure us that the Indians are desirous of Peace, and there is some hope that this event will take place.

Yours very truly,

RUFUS KING.

Judge Cooper

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J. Morris to Judge Cooper

DEAR JUDGE

The town of Unadilla still retains its federal name in spite of the most violent efforts of the antis

After our political opponents had held several meetings



had written enumerable circular letters, had dispatched many expresses, and had rode day and night to the no small inquiry of the nighing quadrupeds, we yesterday came to the pole for supervisor of this town when the number stood for Butler Gilbert Esq.

73

and for David Bates Esquire

68

Majority in favor of the federalists-

5

Never was there a greater discomfiture of the clintonian force in this town, such was their sanguine hopes and prospects of success that bets were freely offered of large odds before the election in favor of Bates, every man in the town on that side who was able to travel was brought up both white and *black*—they had indeed laid their plan so well as to keep at home many of our friends on the Otego Patent and to draw over to their interest many wavering persons and our success is wholly ascribable to the federal spirit of the butternuts; the hardy sons of this new settlement rushed over the Otego hills an irresistible phalanx and bore down all opposition; none were hostile to us but two persons we most heartily *dispipe* to wit Capt. Craw and the would be Esquire, the former a doubleface villain and the latter a notorious rogue— All the other town officers are decidedly and unequivocally federal and anti C——n and were carried in by a very large majority and I think the opposition have given us their last dying speech therefore let us join chorus with Eli

That since in Political dust they are laid

Their all dead and d——d, & no more can be said.

I proposed to the meeting to enter into a resolution to raise a sum at a future day for the purpose building with other towns a House at Cooperstown for the accommodation of the poor which was agreed to by a respectable majority

on taking the question, but when we came to fix the sum the Cullys & other C——n devils raised such a cabal and clamour that the whole business was knocked in the head notwithstanding I urged so strongly the policy interest and economy of the measure

It will be most convenient to me to attend to the running the line we agreed to chain about the middle of this month, I hope therefore it may be convenient and agreeable to you to meet me at *Esquire de Villers* on the evening of tuesday the 15 instant & we will start from *the corner* the next morning & dine at my house

Yours &c

J. MORRIS

2 April 1794.

Judge Cooper

P. S.

Our town looks to the Cooperstown manufactory for a supply of ballots for the ensuing election you will please to have 300 prepared for us & forwarded in good season—from an over officiousness in driving the quill heretofore in this part of the world too much dependence is generally put on me for the performance of that duty but I feel all the conscientious scruples with regard to signing or writing my name on a certain occasion that some men do when about to commit a forgery—

Had I known that a militia Capts. commiss'n. carried with it such authority among the New England settlers I would between you & I and the post have made a dead set at the Commiss'n, of that great personage mentioned on the other leaf last winter.

(Addressed)

Honorable

Judge Cooper

Cooperstown

F. Z. Lequoy to W. Cooper

Charleston, (SC) The 23 March 1795

DEAR SIR

Your letter of the 12th of February has only been received but few days ago, it is not a little satisfaction to me to hear of your family. Whom I am so much indebted for all kinds of favors and polite attentions.

I hope soon to return to my humble and philosophical retreat whilst you will shine on the floor amongst the delegates of the Union, if I am well informed.

My buzenes here are pretty near at an end, and I shall soon see you in Philadelphia.

The Older I grow, My Dr Sir, the less I am determined for matrimony. What you are please to say on that subject is of the most flattering prospect; but, I begin to reflect that to make ones Wiffe happy it is not sufficient to wish it warmly.

My best respects to all your family but more particularly to your Belovved and charming M<sup>s</sup> Anna, I am very Sincerely

F. Z. LEQUOY.

William Cooper Esqre

Member of the House of Representatives,  
in Philadelphia.

Le Quoy was a refugee who kept a small shop at Cooperstown for some time. He turned out to be a French nobleman who at one time had been Port Captain of St. Pierre, Martinique.

Jacob Morris to W. Cooper

Albany 2 January 1796

DEAR SIR:—

The brilliancy exhibited at Cooperstown last Tuesday—the Masonic Festival, was the admiration and astonishment of all beholders— Upwards of 80 People set down to one Table—some very excellent toasts were drank and the greatest decency and decorum was observed as well there (in the Academy) as in the procession from Huntington's Hotel.

In the evening we had a splendid ball 60 couple, 30 in a set, both sets on the floor at the same time, pleasant manners and good dancing. . . .

With compl't's to Miss Cooper and also R. R. Smith notwithstanding he has so totally forgotten his Butternut friends I conclude Dr Sir

Your ob ser't

JACOB MORRIS

Judge Cooper

---

Moss Kent to W. Cooper

Cooperstown, April 7, 1796

DEAR SIR—

Your children here are well and Mrs. Cooper is gradually gaining strength. She has rode out in the carriage for several mornings past and means to continue riding when the weather will permit. Mrs. C—— has enjoined it upon me to inform you that she lives very unhappy and is very impatient for your return and wishes you to bring Isaac & Nancy with you. She is also desirous that you should engage a House at Burlington before you return as it is her



determination never to spend another winter in this country. I would have wished that Richard had wrote you on this business but Mrs. Cooper enjoined it on me, and my duty and politeness to her induced me to be obedient to her request.

I am yours respectfully

MOSS KENT

Wm. Cooper Esq  
Member of Congress,  
Philadelphia

Evidently there were homesick hours for Mrs. Cooper. Judge Cooper rented his house for the winter of 1798, we know from an existing lease, but he seems to have kept it open in 1797—although Mrs. Cooper may have spent that winter at Burlington.

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W. COOPER to  
Hon. Stephen Van Rensselaer  
Albany

On the evening of the third day of June I shall send my wagon and one or two spare horses to the Mohawk to accommodate yourself and Robert—on the fourth I shall have the constables with their staves at the County line to escort the Judge and Retinue. Attend to this and give warning to Fairly. . . .

Yours

W. COOPER.

Stephen Van Rensselaer was a Senator and Judge of the Court of Errors. The "Constables with staves" would have resembled Falstaff's Army.

S. V. R. to W. Cooper

Watervliet Nov. 10 1797

DEAR JUDGE

I send by your son Rich<sup>d</sup> a few poplars and gooseberries to ornament your garden. I am apprehensive the season is not favorable and lest they should not succeed I shall order some to be forwarded in the Spring— Your letter I handed to the Governor— I suppose that was the intention. The day we left your hospitable Mansion I was much diverted. Tom<sup>y</sup> (Rev'd Thomas Ellison) insisted that he knew the road from Herricks and led me to Youngs Lake Richfield & the devil knows not where at length I inquired—my conjectures were true he had never traveled the road. We returned both in a pet—we arrived at one Castles in the town of Warren a miserable house—our horses fatigued it became necessary to have refreshment. I inquired for oats— Oats in plenty, Tom<sup>y</sup> for a pipe. A pipe was brought and good tobacco. pray landlord says Ellison have you anything to eat. Why because we live in the woods do you think we do not eat—says the Esq.—to judge from your looks says Tommy one would not think you did much at it. A laugh all round. The old woman was called; she said we might have fresh pike and beef steaks—fresh pike says Tommy—dancing & laughing—forgot our circuitous rout—and with difficulty could I prevail on him to start after dinner—he advised the Esqr to send you some pike and brandy—being scarce articles in Coopers Town—as you must be tired by this time of reading when we meet I will detail the rest, I expect you to live at my house this winter.

Yours

S VR

(Stephen Van Rensselaer)

The following letter was written by Judge Cooper to Frederick Augustus Muhlenberg with the hope of persuading him to build the Lutheran Seminary, provided for by the Will of John Christopher Hartwick, at Cooperstown, instead of on the Hartwick Patent, where it now stands, about three miles south of the village. The arguments seem convincing, but were of no avail; the Hartwick Seminary is still running and prosperous, while the academy at Cooperstown long since disappeared.

W. Cooper to Muhlenberg

Cooperstown November 19, 1797

DEAR SIR

We have been visited by the Reverend John Frederick Ernst—as the Teacher and Pastor agreed on by you and others to take upon him the charge of those offices consistent with the will of the late John Christopher Hartwick—Altho you have allowed him only the starving sum of 250 dollars Per annum, yet if you join that to our Institution you will render the Man—the Very People you mean to serve and the Community at large a real service for we have a noble Edifice Erected at the Expense of £1500 chartered and a Library granted by the Regents and now in action—but kept open for a superintendant until we know your determinations—which from your ideas, when I had last the pleasure of talking with you, and your waiting on the trustees, and from your statements I expected a proposition on your part—which is still uncertain, and our Seminary of Learning kept back. My dear Sir, it would be as improper

for you to spend the stock of that estate in Erecting Proper buildings in the woods for the Promotion of the object before you, when there is already a chartered institution which will conform to your mode of Directing the business—and that within one mile of the Patent in a fine village where board and all kinds of mechanics are at hand for the convenience of the students—where there is a decent market and upward of 400 souls in a compact settlement—as improper, I say, as it would be to dig a canal from Philadelphia to Germantown for ships to unload their—when there are already good warfs in Philadelphia for that use— The People in this town like the man and will erect a house for him, and subscribe more than you have allowed him besides giving him the advantage of the tuition money—but he must reside here and take the charge of our Academy—from uniting the two interests great Public good will result, from setting up two institutions within four miles of each other, little can be expected from one or the other—in short the object of the Dominie's will can be converted into the highest Public Utility by appropriating not more than half the revenues to our school. We have one room in it that will hold 1000 People— The People on the Patent will attend Divine Service here, for the most part, that would there— Such as wish to be taught the Languages can come better for their children can have board cheaper and the farmer Pay in Produce. But we must know as soon as you can conveniently arrange the business—should you decline joining us we could then make our own arrangements.

Yours with Great Regard

WILLIAM COOPER

Frederick Augustus Muhlenberg, Esq.



Lequoy to W. Cooper

Hague 14th May 1799

DEAR SIR

Your Ambassador Mr. Murray does obligingly afford me a sure opportunity to write to my friends in America, as long as I Leave I will reckon you amongst them. Otsego never will stranger to my heart nor all his good inhabitants.

I am now in a diplomatic line and entrusted with soame important interest of my Country here.

May you, Sir, and your family, be as happy in every respect as I wish, may you long enjoye of the respect and Gratitude from all your tenants and the filial affection of your children. To whom as well as Mrs. Cooper I beg to be remembered is and will be my warmest vow

I remain, Dear Sir,

Your humble Servant

F. Z. LEQUOY

To William Cooper Esqre  
at Cooperstown,  
Otsego County,  
New York

J. Fenimore Cooper to W. Cooper

Coopers Town March 3d 1800

DEAR PAPA

I take this opportunity to write to you as Isaac is a going directly to Philadelphia. we have got 6 lambs one has died and another is most dead. Mr Macdonald is a going to leave us for Albany. Mama will not let Samuel go with Isaac though he wished to very much. I go to school to Mr. Cory where I write and cypher. Mr. Macdonald has had a new student from New York who encamped in Mr. Kents barn and laid 3 days there without being found out

and had his feet frozen. We are all well. I hope I shall have the pleasure of receiving a letter from you soon as this letter reaches you—

Your

Affectionate son

JAMES K. COOPER

18 Century, 1800

This is said to be the first letter written by James Fenimore Cooper; probably it is only the earliest which has survived. The "K" is for "Kent," after Moss Kent, for whom James Cooper had a great admiration.

The following are extracts from letters written to Judge Cooper by Richard R. Smith, of Philadelphia, between the years 1794 and 1802:

New York, 6th Nov. 1794.

DEAR JUDGE,

I wish you would endeavor to sell it for me, and also to get Walbridge to pay me some for I declare I am ashamed that my Friends in Philada should know that I lived Five Years in Otsego and told them I was making money, and then let them find out that I was forced to borrow money to get away— Please to give my compliments to Peter, telling him that not knowing what better to do, I left his in Mrs. Hoffman's hands till he should receive his orders— I have called to see Nancy several times, she has grown to be a charming Girl though she was always that, I mean that she has improved— Miss Bingham and Miss Nesbitt are well— Isaac is well and sends his love, we embark tomorrow morning by daylight for Burlington. Compliments to Mrs. Cooper and believe me ever yours,

RICHD. R. SMITH.

Philada. 25th Novr. 1794

DEAR JUDGE

Isaac is well and seems contented. tho' he says Burlington is not equal to Cooperstown, and there he is certainly right, as it has always been on Sunday when I have been at Burlington, I have not had any opportunity of examining the school in person, but everybody says it is a good one for that kind of learning which you wish Isaac to have. Remember me affectionately to Mrs. Cooper and the children— I Most heartily salute our agreeable little Circle and indeed all Cooperstown—and with every good wish for your prosperity, I remain,

Affectionately

RICHD. R. SMITH.

I believe I shall make more money by the exchange of place, but hang me if I expect more happiness— You mention that Miss Cooper is in Albany yet—when you see her please to present my most sincere respects, and wishes for her happiness—I am not without hopes of seeing her accompany you to this City, when you come down to the grand Council—I hope you have beaten them, tho' I hear nothing of it yet— The Fonda system is not necessary—the markets being very fine, tho they are excessively dear— Mrs. Cooper's kind attention to my mare demands and receives my warmest thanks— I often think of Mrs. C's kindness to me with gratitude and pleasure, I hope she enjoys health, and I am sure I wish her happiness, kiss the dear little children for me, tell them I certainly shall remember to send them something whenever I have an opportunity— It grieves me that I cant stop and help you eat a Turkey or so of a Sunday— Remember me most affectionately to the Lads, tell them I often think of them, and wish I could take a Rubber or two. I believe I have

said everything I ought to say—if there is anything more let it be good Wishes for Mrs. Cooper and the Family—and most sincere good wishes for everybody and everything in Coopers-Town. Anti-federalism is much below Par here. God bless you and believe me

ever most sincerely

yours

10 O clock at night

RICHD. R. SMITH.

so says the Watchman—adieu—

Philada. Jany. 1st, 1795

DEAR JUDGE

I think one of your late letters to me mentioned that you were without an assistant—but perhaps I misunderstood you—my reason for introducing it now is that my Brother is not in any considerable business and I believe would like to live in Cooperstown— I flattered myself that I suited you, and I dare engage that he will give *at least* equal satisfaction—should you have an Idea of this kind you will oblige me by touching upon it in some future communication— Business engrosses the chief of my attention but I often withdraw my mind from it to indulge myself with a retrospective view of the many pleasing Hours which I have spent in our sweet little City, and particularly those which were more immediately confined to domestic enjoyment in your agreeable Family— I fancy Miss Cooper is still in Albany— I hear nothing of her arrival in New York yet I regret the want of an opportunity to send her some new Books with which I know she would be pleased—but someone will doubtless present itself before her return to Coopers Town, previous to which she would scarcely have leisure to read them—in the mean time I may add to the collection— The paper of this Evening gives an Account of General Knox's resignation of His office—you have no



doubt heard that Col. Hamilton has acted a similar part—it is a circumstance sincerely to be lamented that such men should be driven to the necessity of discontinuing their public labours to avoid the slanderous abuse of the greatest Rascals in Society— Remember me most respectfully to Mrs. Cooper and your Family— I hope “de frolic season” has been properly kept— I often longed to spend it with you— I cannot particularise, but I wish to be remembered most affectionately to all my Friends, if I had only the sole of an old Shoe that had belonged to any of them I should reverence it— I know you will do the best you can for my Interest— If Robert Stephens would bring my mare down I would satisfy him well for the expence and trouble. I want her much— You will think I have written enough when I tell you that it is Ten o’clock, and that I slept none last night, I sat up with a Gentleman of my acquaintance who nearly lost his life by an accident— Adieu & think me ever most sincerely

Yours

RICHD. R. SMITH.

I hope you have made your calling and your Election sure.

Philada Feby. 22d. 1798

DEAR JUDGE

You enquire about Merchandising— It is bad enough, God knows— I have often wished myself back in Otsego— Francis, our old Friend Charles, set off for your Country about a week ago— I should have written to you by him but I had heard of your being in New York—We are all busy about electing a Senator in the State Legislature—the contest is between Benj. R. Morgan, a Gentleman, and consequently a Federalist, and a Dirty stinking antifederal Tavern keeper, called Israel Israels— But Judge the

Friends to order here don't understand the business—they are uniformly beaten—we used to order these things better at Cooperstown—Please remember me to your family and believe me always

Your

RICHD. R. SMITH

Philada. March 15th, 1802.

DEAR SIR

Miss Morris will leave this City to day to join her Father in New York, he is confined there by a severe cold caught in travelling which prevented his coming on here for her—Your daughter Nancy would have accompanied Miss M. but I united with Mrs. Fullerton in prevailing upon her to postpone that measure either till she heard from you, or till the unpleasant circumstance of her Brother William at Princeton shall be cleared up— You have unquestionably heard of the destruction of Princeton College by Fire—The manner in which this accident happened has given rise to many conjectures, the most general of which I believe is that it was burned by an accidental communication of a spark to the Roof, but some either from malicious or other motives have insinuated that it was done designedly by some of the students, and I am sorry to find that your son William's name has been mentioned as concerned— As far as I can learn the circumstances which gave rise to suspicion of William, was a Negro girl, belonging to a Tavern Keeper with whom William had had a quarrel, swore before a magistrate (either of her own accord or by the contrivance of her master) that he had offered her money to set Fire to her Master's House— Upon the strength of this I understand William will not be permitted to leave Princeton, till a meeting of the Trustees, which I understand will take place soon. Things being thus circumstanced I concluded

it would be best for Nancy to remain here for the present, for the account had reached her quite as soon or sooner than it did me— She wishes you very much either to come on for her yourself, or send Isaac, and I promised to join her in endeavoring to persuade you—indeed although I have the most decided confidence in William's principles, and have no doubt of his being cleared of this imputation to the satisfaction of all his Friends, yet, I think it would be best for you to come on— I heard nothing of all this till Saturday night. I shall write to day to William to know whether I can be of any service to him— My wife is confined to her chamber by a severe indisposition, or I would have been up to Princeton.

With much haste,

I remain yours

R. R. SMITH

The following letters, signed Elihu Phinney, were written to William Cooper by the owner and publisher of the first newspaper issued in Cooperstown; he writes, shortly after his arrival on November 4th, 1796:

“Cooperstown is about 75 pr cent below Proof—no life—no society—no Telegraphe—let me hear from you as soon as convenient.”

This may have been due to homesickness. Judging from his later letters this lack of life and interest vanished. The list of criminals given in his letter of 1799 must not be considered as characteristic of the village; I think that they were political offenders, as at that

time a bitter partisan fight was under way in this section of the country.

Cooperstown, Jan. 4, 1796

HON. SIR,

Your kind favours of the 9th, 13th, & 15, are duly received; and have afforded me a pleasing confirmation, that distance and high station does not obliterate the remembrance of your friends. I sincerely wish that the horizon of Cooperstown could offer something, either pleasing or interesting to you; but our eyes are turned toward New York and Philadelphia for our mental food, the ensuing winter. Your "*Sweet little town*," remains pretty much in Statu quo. The buildings erected since your departure, are, Baldwin's and Holt's Houses, a Brick Store of Mr. Landon's, a barn of Doct. Gott's, 18 by 24, a barn for Mr. Huntington, 26 by 24, one for myself, 18 by 24, and a small stable on Baldwins lot. The roads are yet nearly impassible, the merchants have not received their goods; and altho' I have 142 reams of paper at Albany & Schenectady, I have not been able to procure any; Mr. Harssey has however been out for Albany and not yet returned.

Eldridge has run off for Canada, to my damage at least 600. and Cooley has absconded £40 in my debt; those losses are equal to my whole proceeds thro an assiduous summer; but I hope by industry to repair the loss.

I have spent but two evenings at Loo since you left town; and these were so spent out of respect to our good friend, the Sheriff, who has been in town at two different times. Your caution on that point, is a proof of your disinterested friendship for me, as well as your ardent wishes for the prosperity of this delightful place; and as such will be cherished by me with scrupulous regard to your advice. Mrs. Phinney and Mrs. Noyes present their respectful



devoirs to Judge Cooper; our family, and the whole village have been very healthy, since you left us. The turret of the Academy missed of being painted for want of oyl, which could not be procured. I saw Mr. Starr yesterday and delivered your kind message; he says he is not in the least discouraged, we immediately opened a subscription for him; but he has concluded not to rebuild till spring. Mr. Andrews, printer, at Stockbridge has mentioned that you would pay me a small balance due me from him; you will please to give orders to Mr. Kent; as also respecting two or three mortgage notices. Do you yet know the result of what passed betwixt you and myself at the Court-house an evening or two before you left Cooperstown?— Having been, I fear, too prolix, I close my letter by assuring you, that I am,

Hon. Sir, your grateful and  
humble servant

ELIHU PHINNEY.

Hon. W. Cooper

Addressed

Honorable William Cooper  
Philadelphia.

Cooperstown, Decm. 23, 1799.

HONORED SIR,

Your kind favor, inclosing Claypool's Daily Advertiser came duly to hand, accept my unfeigned thanks for the favor.

Inclosed are a memorial and two affidavits, which you are requested to dispose of in the proper manner, and to write me the result as soon as known—they are handed to me by a former acquaintance, Elisha Freeman, a very honest man; I conclude they will be handed to the Secretary of State.

Presuming you will not be displeased in knowing the

little occurrences in Cooperstown and Vicinity since your departure I shall recite such as occur to my mind.

Bethel Martin has been admitted to bail in \$600. Reuben Root came and voluntarily surrendered himself on hearing you had issued a warrant—he is bailed in \$500. Herrington and a Methodist Priest, *Frederick Woodward* have been apprehended and admitted to bail in \$500, Alexander Truby has been apprehended and stands committed. I have written to the Governor, requesting a special commission for their Trial, and am informed, not *officially* that he has complied. The guard is still kept up and very good order is observed in the Gaol. Mc Donald is liberated and is preaching on the Hartwick, much chagrined at not being invited to stay in Cooperstown— The Society have sent for and obtained a Priest from Johnstown by name of Sweetman— B. Wight has resigned his office of Gaoler, and Charles Mudge is deputed— Jo. Strong has sued me for defamation for saying he had taken fees on both sides. I shall want your evidence—he behaves since his late triumph with more insolence than ever— Geo. Walker has got a fine boy, and all well— Capt. Sprague has erected a Billiard table; there has as yet been no betting, or very trifling and I believe it will demolish card playing, and I hope will have no bad effect.— E. Tillotson has given I. Ingals a general Power of Attorney and absconded. Calvin Wright has become bankrupt, and contemplates taking the Benefit of the Insolvent Act. Old Peck and Co. are indefatigable in their endeavors to procure an entirely New Judiciary for this County— I beg you to be extremely cautious as to delivery. my private opinion is opposed to the measure. I hope your wish to retire will give way to the Public Good— I hope to see you at January Court— Shall take the earliest opportunity of informing you of every occurrence of moment.

The election of Mr. Sedgwick to the Chair is a happy presage of the predominance of Federal principles in the House of Representatives— I find the Senate has given a sort of silent disapprobation of the late Mission to France, that is a subject, in my opinion, which should be delicately handled. It is certainly unpalatable; but may be politically expedient.

Must we be still plagued, cheated and insulted, by that Pest to Society, that Scourge to Cooperstown, Jo. Strong as Post-master? It is the united wish of all true friends to the interest of the County that an *honest man* should be appointed. Perceiving you begin to yawn at the prolixity of this epistle, I shall close by wishing you health and happiness—

I remain,

Honored Sir,

your unfeigned Friend and

humble servant

E. PHINNEY.

Honorable William Cooper,  
in Congress,  
*Philadelphia*

Cooperstown Feb. 21, 1800

HON'D SIR,

I sent you about 6 weeks ago 2 packages enclosing petitions and affidavits from some men in Worcester, accompanied by a letter giving a circumstantial account of the little occurrences in Cooperstown and having received no acknowledgment of the receipt of the same I fear they have miscarried, or, that the infamous Scape goat has suppressed your answer. Be so good as send me word thro' the Cherry-Valley Post-office, for the continued villainy of Jo Strong is insufferable. Last Sunday the mail lay over till Monday

morning; nor could any one except his small junto procure either a letter or paper, altho' on Sunday evening repeated applications were made, and the room constantly full of people.

You have no doubt, ere this heard that the late honorable Council on the last day of their sitting ordered a Superseas for me. The County is alive with indignation and apprehension. I cannot predict what the result will be; but hope for the best. Your son Richard is so busily engaged in the business as to almost prevent his attention to any other.

I remain, Hon. Sir,  
with great respect  
your obedt. humble servt.  
E. PHINNEY.

Hon. W. Cooper

Eliphalet Nott to Judge Cooper

Cherry Valley Dec. 2 1796.

TO JUDGE COOPER—SIR—

Your goodness will pardon me for troubling you on a subject so uninteresting to yourself. My reasons are partly the intimations you gave me at Cooperstown, of affording me some assistance provided I purchased the half of Mr Waldo's farm—but more especially the humanity of your character—Mr Waldo has obtained from Wm Banior in behalf of Clark a durable Lease of his farm—&c— I have bought of Mr Waldo & am to make all the payments before the first of April next— I wish to hire eight or nine hundred dollars to be paid in yearly payments two hundred dollars cash—

Now Sir if you will be so kind as to direct Mr Kent to let me have the whole or part of the some mentioned you will



greatly oblige one of your fellow creatures, 'tho not a personal acquaintance— As security I will propose Judg. Hudson, Luther Rich or O. L. Waldo, as sharers of the obligations in company with me—or give you a mortgage of the farm— I am sensible Sir it may cause you some trouble being so far off—but the obligingness of your character assures me your assistance notwithstanding if it be within your power— I wish you sir, to be so kind as to write me what you will do respecting the business as soon as it is convenient—and if you can do me this favor at all or any part of it—you will please to write to Mr Kent on the subject . . .

I am sir with great esteem &

Respect your

Friend & most

Obed—

Jud. Cooper—

ELIPHALET NOTT.

I insert this letter to Judge Cooper to show that "G. Washington" was a landholder in our vicinity, as were also Necker and Madame de Staël.

SIR—

The lands which I hold on, or near the Mohawk river, are in Partnership with Mr. Clinton (late Gov<sup>r</sup>. of New York) who has had, and continues still to have by a power of Attorney the disposal of them.

It is not in my power to inform you at what price he has lately sold any—but of this you can easily be informed by a line to that Gentleman or if you desire it, I will write to him myself on the subject.

I am Yr Obed<sup>t</sup> Ser.

G. WASHINGTON.

Saturday }  
20th Feby } 1796

I have nothing to show where "G. Washington's" land was situated. James Necker's tract consisted of twenty-three thousand acres, in McComb's Purchase, St. Lawrence County; part was in town number Six and part in "Fitzwilliam"; both in the third allotment.

Necker and Judge Cooper had a partnership agreement as to this land, still existing among my old papers. It was with reference to it that Necker's daughter, after his death, wrote as follows:

Coppet—on the 17th of October 1804  
Switzerland

SIR,—

I have received the agreement you have made for my lands, with M<sup>rs</sup> Morris and LeRay. I sent to M<sup>rs</sup> Le-Ray and Bayard, my respectable correspondents, the authorisation to accept, or refuse, or modificate the agreement.

They have all my trust. If they accept, I shall be very happy to entertain an en sut correspondance with you. And I am sure by the praises which my friends have given to your character, that you will not consider this transaction as a mere affair of interest, but that you will take pleasure in increasing the fortune of a mother of three children, and of a daughter of M. Necker. I pray you, Sir, to render our communication rapid, what ever may be the distance which separates us, to send your letters open to me, by the way of M<sup>rs</sup> LeRay and Bayard, they will join their observations to your letters, and I shall answer immediately.

Excuse me, Sir, for my ignorance of a foreign language.

I can read it perfectly well, but this is the first time I did venture to write in it.

In every language, believe me, Sir,

yours &c

NECKER B<sup>N</sup>E STAEL DE  
HOLSTEIN.

M<sup>r</sup> le juge Cooper.

---

Hannah Cooper to her brother Isaac.

This letter is undated but is indorsed "Miss Cooper, June 25.—July 3rd., 1798, received in Albany." It is interesting as showing that Isaac Cooper went to school at Reverend Thomas Ellison's at Albany, where James was sent two years later. The "Jim" mentioned is James Fenimore Cooper.

Mr. Isaac Cooper

Reverend Thomas Ellison  
Albany.

Nancy tells me in her letter that you ask me to write to you. I am happy to do it, or any thing else my dear Brother that you wish—but should have been more happy if the request had been made in a letter of your own. I should have been pleased with the attention, but now hope I shall soon have the pleasure of hearing from you, pray how do you like Albany? what are your studies? and who your companions? the last thing is of vast consequence, and I sincerely hope you may not become intimate or acquainted with the low, vicious Boys of which you have so many around you. Mama is much better, the Boys are well, Jim has grown almost as large as William, the Doctor

has grown also, they are very wild and show plainly they have been bred in the Woods, they go to school and are learning Latin. I do not know what progress they make, but hope you will make a great improvement in your learning, pray write soon and believe me your affectionate sister

ANNA COOPER

Philadelphia June 25

While this letter is signed "Anna Cooper" it was written by Hannah, who seems to have been at that time often called Anna. Nancy was her younger sister Anna who became Mrs. George Pomeroy and for whom the old stone house was built on the corner of River and Main streets.

Judge Cooper made every effort to educate his sons. In addition to the schools at Cooperstown, two of them, probably William and Richard, went to a school in Schenectady. Isaac and James went to Rev. Thomas Ellison's, at St. Peter's Rectory, Albany. James went to Yale and was expelled in his junior year, William went to Princeton and was also expelled, I think. I do not know what, if any, colleges the others went to.

Hannah Cooper to  
Mr. Isaac Cooper,  
Mrs. Simmons,  
No. 7 North Sixth Street, Philadelphia

DEAR ISAAC You observe I begin in this old fashioned way—being so sensible of your worth since your absence—that no address save an affectionate one would correspond with my sentiments. I have just returned from hearing a new



Minister, who is offered a situation here—his name is Lewis—from New England—his discourse was very agreeable—could we get him—we shall have no occasion to lament Mr Mc Donald's absence. Our friend and neighbour Mrs. Dunham is below—about to take a Sunday's dinner with us—and little Amelia Osborne these two with A. B. are all we have in addition to our own number—and I suppose you think a part of these sufficient to make us happy—her amiable manners and character do indeed delight us, but we are beginning to anticipate her loss—which most probably will now shortly happen— Ann has been writing to her. there you must look for particulars— Saw Katy and Cousin at Church—a pretty looking little girl this last— The Doctor visits us sometimes, he pines after you—at least he says so. I do not know if you Gentlemen be sincere when you say such things of each other, when speaking of the ladies, we do not expect truth. Uncle James has removed to the Mills. Of course our Hartwick rides are less frequent than formerly—the New Bridge, "Isaac and Mary," has been carried away by the flood—at least materially damaged. I hope this is not an unhappy prognostic— The girls I conclude have informed you that Capt. Cooper has left us— What do you mean by abusing the Philadelphia ladies, they are very handsome, and very elegant I am sure.— Write to me to explain this matter and consider me your affectionate sister—

HANNAH COOPER

Cooperstown April 13th 1800

Hannah Cooper to Isaac Cooper,

Cooperstown, April 26 1800

MY DEAR ISAAC—We are as well as can be expected—yes as well as can be expected, for two hours ago—the amiable

interesting and charming M. A. M. left us— You have been remiss in not writing lately

Henry complains—Nancy scolds—there is another who feels it although she neither complains nor scolds— We wish to have particular accounts of you—when are we to look for you home? This summer or not? Take care of your old stockings and bring them with you, in haste your affectionate sister

HANNAH COOPER

Mr. Isaac Cooper.

“Charming M. A. M.” was Mary Ann Morris, who a little later married Isaac Cooper. Fenimore Cooper in his unfinished *Sketch of Otsego Hall* mentioned her as having spent part of the winter of 1800 there.

William Cooper to

William Cooper Junior

Princeton College,

New Jersey July 9, 1800

DEAR WILLIAM

You have not written me since my return to Coopers-town. I am anxious to hear of your advancement, and calculate on your being the first of scholars, knowing that your abilities and memory are equal to any of your age; and you have everything to make you ambitious; here is a great country and no young man has such an opportunity as yourself of being the first man in it. On your industry depends whether you are to be the great good and useful man—or nothing. I have it in contemplation to send you to Edinborough or London for two or three years before you launch into life and after you have the sanction

of that first of schools at Princeton, to which you may if you please be an Honour and make its tutors and governors Proud to claim you as a Product of that institution; and I will say it again—you have the ability and may if you will

WM. COOPER.

On the inside of this sheet is the following by Hannah Cooper:

DEAR BROTHER—it is very late at night—nobody in the house up—save myself—and Mama, who is playing upon the Organ—this amusement engages her every night after the family have separated, and very pretty effect it has, being not unlike a serenade, which you know is the manner of courting with the Spaniards—it must be charming for the Spanish Belles—but very toilsome for their Beaus— The Weather is now uncommonly warm here, our fourth of July passed very brilliantly away—there were not any fire works but the Masonic Hall was handsomely illuminated—the Lads and Lasses repaired in the evening to our House—and we had quite a large party to dance “rallying round our library” Sister Nancy has not returned from Sister Mary’s yet. We expect her in a day or two Mr. Fitch has Richard’s Farm—he removes there shortly. Doctor grows quite tall, is nearly as large as James—the family desire their love,—Good night—may your dreams be sweet

Your loving sister HANNAH COOPER

Cooperstown July 12, 1800

J. Fenimore Cooper to Isaac Cooper

Albany Sept. 5 1801

CORPORAL

I sit down to write to you by the desire of Mrs. Ellison who wishes me to ask you to send by the most careful person

you can find coming this way the very finest piece of cambric muslin you have got, in your Store. Such as Mrs. Banyer got. Sisters & Papa left this, this morning Papa gave me 70 dollars for to pay some debts and as I went to Mr. Banyers to see them start I either lost them a going or after I came to Mr. Banyers I do not know which, I searcht for them but they have not yet shown their faces, Sisters both where in good health, likewise Papa, Lieut. Cooper is a recruiting here, you must excuse mistakes bad writing as I am in a great hurry.

JAMES COOPER

Mr. Isaac Cooper  
Cooperstown.

W. Cooper to B. Walker

DEAR SIR

the land is yet in despute. I have obtained two decrees against Judge Livingston. he now applys to the court of Errors. I think that it belongs to him, if to me a division will be desirable.

why are you not at the Post of duty, of Honour, of danger, of Every thing that is disquieting to a man whose views are honest, of Everything that is instructive to the man who wishes to learn the art of, Hook & Snivery—if there is such a word, or if their is not, I now make it.

Adieu

WM. COOPER.

Jany. 6, 1802

B Walker Esq.

J. H. Imlay visited Judge Cooper at Cooperstown in the summer of 1800, with General Bloomfield. It is to this visit which he refers repeatedly in his letters. He



evidently was in love with Hannah Cooper, and as late as 1810, the date of his last letter, was true to her memory.

His correspondence throws an interesting light on the monument set up in 1801 or 2 at the spot where she was killed in October, 1800; it was made in Philadelphia under his supervision and Richard R. Smith's; one of the inscriptions, which cover three sides of the shaft, was written by him, one by a Mrs. Meredith, and one by a Miss Wistar, both of Philadelphia; the fourth side was to have had an inscription written by Mrs. Jepson, of New York or Albany, and a Mrs. Beach, then living in Virginia; for some reason this latter inscription never was put on the monument.

The inscriptions referred to as they now appear on the monument read as follows:

#### SOUTH SIDE

Sacred to the Memory of  
Miss Hannah Cooper, Daughter  
of the Hon<sup>ble</sup> William Cooper  
and Elizabeth his Wife.

In the bloom of Youth, in perfect  
health, and surrounded with her

Virtues

On the 10th day of September, 1800

She was instantly translated from  
this World

Thrown from her horse, on the spot

on which this monument is erected.

Sensible, gentle, amiable,

In life beloved, in death lamented,

By all who knew her.

Unconscious of her own perfections

She was a stranger to all ambition

but that of doing good.

By her death

The tender joys of an affectionate

Father, the fond expectations of

a delighted Mother

In an instant were blasted!

Passenger—Stop!

And for a moment reflect—

That neither accomplishment of

Person

Nor great improvements of mind

Nor yet greater goodness of heart,

Can arrest the hand of death.

But—She was prepared for that  
Immortality, in which she believed

And of which she was worthy—

To departed worth & excellence

This monument is erected.

This tribute of affection is inscribed

By a friend, this 1st day of January, 1801.

## NORTH SIDE

For thee, sweet Maid,  
Resplendent beams of thought,  
Wisdom's rich love,  
By Seraph's hands, were given  
Thy spotless soul,  
The pure effulgence caught,  
It sparkled—was exhaled—  
And went to Heaven.  
'Twas thine—  
To animate life's swift career,  
Mild—modest—artless—  
Innocently gay,  
'Twas thine—to fill an higher  
Nobler sphere—  
With sainted spirits  
In the realms of day,  
Thy native worth  
With diamond pen enrolled,  
Beyond this sculptured  
Monument shall live.  
And charity—  
Of fair ethereal mould  
A lasting tribute  
To thy memory give.

## EAST SIDE

The sculptured marble  
The recording tomb,  
Shall mouldering perish  
In the hand of time.  
Thy weeping friends,  
Be gathered to their home  
And memory cease  
To mark thy shrine.  
Some hoary moss,  
Some drooping willow'd shade,  
Or decent sod,  
Or still more humble dust  
Shall guard the spot  
Where thou art laid  
In long  
Oblivious silence lost.  
Yet shall thy virtues,  
Thou dear sainted maid,  
By friends transmitted  
Thro' succeeding years;  
Be still remembered  
'Til e'en time shall fade,  
When thou released  
From mortal cares,



Shall live triumphant

In a happier world—

J. A. Imlay to R. F. Cooper

Allen Town New Jersey Mar. 29th 1803

MY DEAR SIR

. . . I greet you with my best friendship and good wishes. The recollection of the many happy hours, which my last visit to Cooperstown afforded me, has often induced the wish to become an inhabitant of your pleasant and charmingly situated village—But alas! With that desire is associated the recollection of a catastrophe at once the most melancholy, the most painful, and affective of my life, even time itself—which with lenient hand—is said to mitigate sorrow—and reconcile affliction—will never from my mind efface the recollection of that event—no, I shall ever remember—and ever lament it— . . .

I most sincerely and fervently reciprocate the good wishes of yourself—and the family—and I beg you to present me to each one—in terms of the most cordial good will and regards—and believe me—

Very sincerely your

friend

J. H. IMLAY.

P. S. Miss J. Imlay feels herself much gratified in the kind remembrance of her—by your sister and desires to present her love in return.

Richard F. Cooper, esquire

Coopers Town

Otsego Co.,

New York.

Alexander Hamilton to Judge Cooper.

New York, September 6, 1802

DEAR SIR

I congratulate you and myself on your victory over Brockholst. Whether your interest is much promoted by it or not is of small consequence—In the triumph of vanquishing such an enemy. That you know was your principal inducement and I know that you will be willing to pay well for it.

I have been deliberating whether to charge you 200 or 100 pounds for my services in this cause. In fixing upon the latter, I am afraid I shall offend you. But I love to show my moderation & therefore whether you are angry or not I will only have One hundred.

This I beg you to remit without delay—I have been building a fine house and am very low in cash; so that it will be amazingly convenient to me to touch your money as soon as possible.

I wish you many pleasant moments and that you may be able to steer clear of the Court of Errors. I have fought so hard for you that I am entirely exhausted.

Yours with great regard,

A. HAMILTON

The Brockholst referred to was Brockholst Livingston and the dispute was over the title to certain lands in the western part of the State.

Aaron Burr to Judge Cooper

Philada 26 Feb. 1793

SIR:—

Upon my arrival in this city a few days past, I had the pleasure to receive your letter of the 19th ult. which had I suppose lain some time in the office here during my absence.

I thank you much for your Civility in regard of the K. Kill Land, but I observe with extreme surprize that you would suppose me capable of deceiving or misleading you in the smallest particular. On the 18 or 19 Dec Mr. Cutting conveyed to me in fee simple all the lands late Griswold at K. K. (two or three lots which had been sold excepted) together with a small farm at Lonenburgh. I came soon after to this City, the Deed and all the papers remaining in my possession and having then no intention to part with the Land; Indeed I went to some trouble and expense to settle the claim of Lott &c.—About the last of Jan. I returned to N. York and then agreed with Mr. C.— to sell him the Land again for a certain sum more than I had given, and did thereupon re-convey them to him— This sum together with that part of the purchase money which I had paid, are secured to me by a Mortgage now on record in Albany— I believe I apprized you of this reconveyance, by Letter written on or about the Day it was executed—

I beg you to pardon the trouble of this trifling detail, (which is intended only to satisfy you of my Candor in the business,) and to be assured that I am

Very respectfully,

Yr. Obedtt. St.

AARON BURR.

The following letter relates to the building of Christ Church, Cooperstown. The copy in my possession does not show to whom it was written.

Cooperstown July 13, 1806

DEAR SIR—

Your letter on Various subjects has just come to hand—which I take in order.

The vote of the Vestry of Trinity Church to give the

society of Episcopalians in and round Cooperstown, 1500 Dollars when they had finished the church under contemplation will no doubt warme the hearts and create a Joy amongst them to think they are still had in remembrance by their opulent Brethren—as to myself it does not meet fully what I expected. Under other circumstances the Donation is a liberal one for which the Vestry ought to be thanked,—but as I am not of that Society, tho' I love them, and led into the measure solely from the good that is manifest since Mr. Nash has brought them together and frequently hearing my Poor neighbors lament their inability to bring up their children in the way they had been brought by their fathers. But three days ago I lodged with a farmer—he had his harvest hands round him—in the morning he called them all together, he and his wife kneeling, he read Prayers and all was quiet—The effect of such things are better felt than expressed but on this ocation it is proper you should know my motive for offering to Do what I expect but very few of your wealthy members within the Pale of your church would do for their own cause—tho' I consider it as Every Mans cause—and I have thought for two or more years back that our political welfare depended much on adhearing to the rules of religion—But I cannot act under a mark of suspicion—had the donation been in \$500. annual instalments and mine the same—I could have gone on with the Church—yet I should then have thought the great wealth of your church ought to give \$500 more than an Individual not of that Church—I am conscious that the Vestry may have had their donations illy appropriated, but in all my undertakings had one not been carried into effect—they might suspect this to fail and by a careful vote first see my money paid for the Church; and if done to Expectations, refunded Part—religious societys ought not to grind their Poor connections or liberal friends.



The Vestry gave to Utica Church \$2,000. around which all the rich are Churchmen—not so here—all the Rich are presbyterians and other persuasions. I wish you would get them to change the business so I can act as with my friends—and the church shall be done, God willing.

W

(unaddressed copy)

Lady Hay to Richard F. and Isaac Cooper

Quebec—17th March—18010

Will the much estimated sons of an invaluable, lamented Friend, accept of the sincere condolence and unaffected sympathy of One who tho' not personally acquainted with you is no Stranger to your worth—Which was the Theme, and Pride of him, that swerved not from Truth, who it has pleased Heaven to deprive you of—Yours My Friends, permit me to rank you so, is a loss in which many will participate, for universal philanthropy and Benevolence of Heart, in continual exercise for the welfare of his Fellow creatures, were the leading Characteristics of your now Sainted Father—As to myself, much have I been indebted to him for Friendship and attention to my Interest, which for many years he has been so good as to take charge of—and had I been deprived of a Brother I cou'd not have felt it more—Nor ever, will the recollection of his many acts of kindness, be obliterated from my memory—To every Individual of your Family I can never be indifferent, and beg of you to present me, as a partaker in their Grief to your respected Mother and Sister, the latter of whom, I have understood to be the amiable counter-part of the dear departed Hannah Cooper who I had the utmost affection for and therefore am convinced how deeply She is afflicted.

My Draft, excuse my speaking upon Business, for Two

Hundred Dollars, was Protested, owing I suppose to the Tenant of my House in Fair Street not coming forward in due time with the quarters Rent payable the 1st of Nov. but was afterwards paid—and if you will excuse the liberty I take in saying, if you wou'd be so very good as to get somebody in New York to receive the Feb. Quarter, I should be very much obliged—The Tenant is Mrs. Violetta Taylor—No. 34 Fair Street—The Rent Five Hundred and Twenty five Dollars pr. year—Directing it, at the same time to be mentioned to her the *hope* and *expectation* that she will be ready as soon as possible after the 1st of May, with the quarters Rent then due—Soon after which Period (My Husband having obtained a short leave of absence from his Regiment for the purpose of accompanying me) I shall have the pleasure of calling upon you at Cooper's Town, in my way to New York, and conferring with you on the Business, that my late excellent Friend so kindly took charge of, meanwhile do me the favor to believe, you nor yours, have not a more sincere well-wisher than—

ANN HAY.

On the 24th of April, my Best of Friends sold for me through the Medium of Mr. Leonard Bleecker Broker at New York Twenty One shares that I held in the Bank of Jersey, and bought in their stead Eighteen Shares in the Combined Bank of Manhattan and Utica—Which he judged better for me from it's being nearer Canada, and more to my advantage from it's giving Surplus Dividends—The Shares are in the name of your Father, and I have his acknowledgment that they are mine—May I crave your attention to such *Interest* as may result from it— But as from some *particular reasons*, this circumstance has been known *only* to your *Father*, My Sister in Law *Miss Hay*, and *myself* wou'd wish it, if you please, to *rest con-*

*fidentially* with his Successors, or shou'd it be too troublesome to them, at least until I shall have the satisfaction of seeing them—Nevertheless, as I shou'd be singularly obliged by your taking the trouble to say you have received this, and that you are to be at Home in the month of May, I shall consider it a still further favor that you only Notice this *last mentioned matter* by Observing that you have a *perfect knowledge of the extent* of the Trust reposed by me in your late most truly Good Father—accept my best apologies for all this trouble.—

The writer of the foregoing, Ann Hay, was at the time Lady Hay; she was the daughter of Sheffield Howard, a younger son of the Duke of Norfolk, who married his tutor's sister and came to New York. Howard was a great friend of Judge Cooper's and before his death asked the Judge to care for his daughter. She married first, Major Charles Bingham, and their daughter, Ann Howard Bingham, married Clement Biddle Penrose.

Ann Hay's correspondence is very amusing and voluminous; she devotes much thought to concealing from her husbands the whereabouts and amount of her property. She was always in need of money; wrote on very heavy, fine paper with gilded edge, and with a most flattering and persuasive pen.

The large number of her letters which are still among Judge Cooper's correspondence almost justify the enthusiasm of the writer of the following, which is inserted

here, out of its chronological order, so as to follow the one letter of hers included among those selected as bearing on the early days of Cooperstown and its people:

J. H. Imlay to Wm. Cooper

Allentown June 15th, 1805.

MY DEAR FRIEND

Your favour of the 18th ult. did not reach me until a few days since owing to my absence from home, dancing attendance on the long, troublesome, vexcatious and expensive lawsuit of my mothers before the Court of Chancery of your State which has been sitting for sometime in New York—It was set down for Argument in August last—but the death of the great, and good, and ever to be lamented Hamilton prevented the hearing then coming on— It was again set down for argument about the middle of May last, and continued from day to day, under the hope and expectation that it would have a hearing—when the Chancellor about 10th inst. adjourned the Court— So it is—put in the glorious uncertainty, the abominable vexcation and procrastination of the law—of which professionally and otherwise I am heartily sick and tired— This suit has now in some way or shape been pending between 8 and 9 years—and has in one way and another cost upwards of \$700, besides all my trouble, time &c. &c. and what may be worse than all the rest, is, I fear, that the loss of Hamilton, may be attended with a loss of the cause.

A few days after the receipt of your letter, I recd. one from your friend Mrs. Hay—I need not tell you how cheerfully & with what alacrity I shall attend to the request expressed in your letter— And make it my particular and personal business to see the land—and obtain the best in-



formation, as to the value thereof & the terms of compromise & settlement—and advise her thereof, without delay— But pray, my friend, who is this female friend of yours? I seem to have some sort of recollection of her, but so imperfect as to amount to nothing— Her letter in every respect does her very great credit—and except the letters of her, who alas! alas! is no more—whose hard, hard fate I can never cease to lament—whose many excellencies & virtues, I delight to recollect & mention, and whose memory I must always cherish and love, it is one of the best letters from a female, I ever saw— Independent of your recommendation, the letter of your friend would secure to her my best services & exertions— The style and manner of her letter is at once so truly polite, so bland, urbane, handsome, that I am extremely desirous to become acquainted with and learn her life history—of which last, I must beg you to inform me as early as possible— These have led me to form an opinion of her which I have much curiosity to know how far it is correct— And as I shall have shortly to write to Mrs. H——, I should wish to hear from you previous thereto— I have not since the summer of 1800 felt much like getting in love—but really the style and manner of the letter of your friend are so much like those of her, whose memory I have just alluded to, that I am not without much admiration, I desire of an acquaintance with your friend— I wish to write a line to Richard, by our mail of to day— must therefore conclude, with the assurances of my affectionate regards & good will to yourself & the family—

I am yours &c

J. H. IMLAY

Addressed—

The Honble Judge Cooper  
Cooperstown  
New York

J. H. Imlay to R. F. Cooper

Allentown Febuy 12 1810

MY FRIEND

Not until a short time since did the melancholy intelligence that Judge Cooper was no more reach me. As a friend from whom I had recd many acts of kindness & good will—and the father of yourself and of her whose memory I yet love, and hold in great veneration and affection, much do I lament his death—and tenderly & sincerely sympathize with yourself & family in your affliction & bereavement.

Said your sister to me, in our last walk along the Banks of your river on the evening before I left Coopers Town—as passing by the Grave Yard in the rear of your Father's House—"how long, think you, it may be, ere myself or you—and many more of our friends, may become inhabitants of that Mansion"? pointing to the Grave Yard—I replied—"I hope long." "Ah! no"—she said—as to herself—"it will not be long—Some ten—twenty or thirty years will number us all among its inhabitants. What an inch of time—What a drop in the great ocean of eternity—" Prophetic words indeed as to herself 'Tho sometimes—

"So concealed the hour and remote the fear—

"Death still draws nearer—never seeming near"

and with great truth does the poet add—

"Great Standing miracle! That Heaven assigned"

"Its only thinking thing, this turn of mind"

When your feelings and convenience will permit, will you oblige me with some account of your Father's illness &

death—And accept for yourself & the family, the unfeigned sympathy and condolence of

Your friend

J. H. IMLAY

Richard F. Cooper, Esq.,  
Coopers Town  
New York

James Fenimore Cooper to R. F. Cooper

New York, May 18th, 1810

I wrote you yesterday, a letter in a great hurry, as its contents are of some importance, I employ the leisure time offered today, to inform you more fully of my views.

When you were in the city, I hinted to you, my intention of resigning at the end of this session of congress, should nothing be done for the navy—my only reason at that time was the blasted prospects of the service. I accordingly wrote my resignation and as usual offer'd it to Capt. Lawrence, for his inspection—he very warmly recommended to me to give the service the trial of another year or two, at the same time offering to procure me a furlough which would leave me perfect master of my actions in the interval. I thought it wisest to accept this proposition—at the end of this year I have it in my power to resign should the situation of the Country warrant it.

Like all the rest of the sons of Adam, I have bowed to the influence of the charms of fair damsel of eighteen. I loved her like a man and told her of it like a sailor. The peculiarity of my situation occasioned me to act with something like precipitancy—I am perfectly confident however, I shall never have cause to repent of it. As you are coolly to decide, I will as coolly give you the qualities of my mistress. Susan De Lancey is the daughter of a man of very

respectable connections and a handsome fortune—amiable, sweet tempered and happy in her disposition—She has been educated in the country, occasionally trying the temperature of the City to rub off the rust—but hold a moment, it is enough she pleases *me* in the qualities of her *person* and *mind*. Like a true Quixotic lover, I made proposals to her father—he has answered them in the most gentlemanly manner—You have my consent to address my daughter if you will gain the approbation of your mother. He also informs me that his daughter has an estate in the County of Westchester in reversion, secured to her by a deed of trust to him, and depend—upon the life of an aunt Aetat 72—so you see, Squire, the old woman cant weather it long. I write all this for *you*—you know I am indifferent to anything of this nature. Now I have to request you will take your hat and go to mother, the boys, girls, and say to them have you any objections that James Cooper shall marry at a future day, Susan de Lancey—If any of them forbids the bans may the Lord have forgiven them, for I never will. Then take your pen and write to Mr. De Lancey stating the *happiness* and *pleasure* it will give all the family to have this connection completed—all this I wish you to do *immediately* as I am deprived of the pleasure of visiting my flame, until this be done, by that confounded *bore* delicacy,—be so good as to enclose the letter in one to me, at the same time dont forget to enclose a handsome sum to square the yards here and bring me up to Cooperstown.

I wish not to interrupt you in your attempt to clear the estate, My expenditures shall be as small as possible.

Your Brother

JAMES COOPER.

Richard Fenimore Cooper Esquire  
Cooperstown  
New York



Isaac Cooper to J. Fenimore Cooper

Cooperstown 15th Dec. 1817

MY DEAR JAS,

Our niece Hannah Cooper was buried on Friday last after an illness of a fortnight, a singular, as well as a most savage circumstance happened on that day. The Cary Family came down to attend the funeral, Cornelius, Eliza, Richard's wife and two blacks, returned home in the evening, the two first after having drank very freely at Mrs. Clarkes stopped at Williams Tavern at Pierstown and took an additional supply, after which Cornelius took the whip and reins out of the servants hands and undertook to drive himself. The going being very rough and icy and he driving most furiously up hill & down, induced those that were able, to get out of the waggon—being Richards wife and the two servants, leaving the other two in the waggon. Cornelius not being sensible that any one was left in but himself continued running his Horses full speed till he reached home, from habit he was enabled to unharness and put his Horses in the stable after which he went to bed, the rest of the party who got out, returned about an hour after in the dark, through rain & mud, when inquiry was made for Eliza, when upon search she was found dead on the bottom of the waggon, having it is presumed fallen out of her chair and been jolted to death by the roughness of the roads. As the story goes Cornelius when informed of her death, raised his head a little from the pillow, replied "then bury her" turned & took his other nap.

Mrs. Clarke a few days before the death of Poor Hannah added a daughter to that unfortunate race. She appears overwhelmed with afflictions. The boys are here and look very well.

Attend to the De Kalb affairs. Danberry is quite uneasy—but they detain the papers—

Sincerely with respect to wife &  
and all the family

I. COOPER

Mrs. Pomeroy buried her  
infant about three weeks ago.

James Cooper Esq.

Mamaroneck,

West Chester N. Y.

Goldsborough Cooper to R. Cooper

Hyde April 15, 1827

DEAR DICK

We have had one cotillion party of which she most probably has given you a full description—we danced until about three—the gentlemen drank wine as usual, like studs, and the girls, whew! how they did go on, they put me quite to the blush, and in that case you can imagine their conduct. We have had radishes and sallad for a fortnight which I imagine is rather more than you can say of gardens in Hudson—we shall soon have cucumbers.

GOLD.

Richard Cooper Esq.

Hudson.

G. Cooper to R. Cooper

Hyde: I have forgotten the day  
of the month but look at the  
post mark, 1828

DEAR DICK

Prentiss is soon to take for a handmaid Miss Shankland and we have had, are having and are about to have an

abundance of parties, glees and merry makings. I was at Morehouses wedding party and at Judge Nelsons—and I may attend one or two more. Our girls, by these I mean,—pooh—you know who I mean, look well, are in fine spirits, step freely, and in fine give every indication of proper keeping and good condidion. . . .

Good bye

Your affec. Brother

GOLD

Richard Cooper Esq

Hudson

Columbia Co. N. Y.

The following is an invitation to a more formal entertainment and is, perhaps, the first invitation to dine with a "President of the U. States" received by a resident of this village. It is in the handwriting of G. Washington and while undated as to year was probably sent in either 1796, or one of the two following years.

"The President U. States  
requests the pleasure of  
Mr. Cooper's company to  
dine *to-day* at *three* o'clock,  
Saturday 26 Nov."

## TODDSVILLE

WHILE it is not quite in line with the purpose of these sketches to wander into the history of the hamlet of Toddsville, I feel that anything bearing on the past of the County is worth preserving; certainly where it is as unique as the recollections of a man in his ninety-seventh year, born and brought up and now living in that community, and with an apparently unimpaired memory. Such a man is Samuel Street Todd living in the little gothic cottage on the east bank of the Oaks Creek and overlooking the picturesque ruins of the old mills of Toddsville, and within sight of the four old Todd houses built respectively about 1792, 1805, 1811, and one at a later date, now unknown.

Mr. Todd is bent with years, but clear of mind and memory and with a voice of wonderful power and tone; he is, according to his doctor, going to round out his full century. To such a man old age can have no terror.

I spent with him two half days and listened to almost first-hand tales of the early settlement of the country; for remembering himself events back of 1830, he of



course had heard at an age when his memory was most receptive, the tales and experiences of his elders.

The settlement of Toddsville was the story of the settlement of many of the little hamlets of western New York; the millwrights came from New England.

Samuel Todd's story was as follows: About the beginning of the nineteenth century six brothers, of the name of Todd, and one sister, came from Wallingford, Conn., to the site of Toddsville, where there was a water power and a sawmill. The property belonged to one Tubbs who had bought three hundred acres from Judge Cooper and built the sawmill. The Todds bought him out, built a log cabin, and lived in it and in the Tubbs house which still stands at the head of the Main Street of Toddsville, facing south. They were a family of millwrights and of very good New England stock; there were Johiah, Lemuel, Caleb, Zira, Bethel, and Achel, and the sister, Augusta. My old friend was Lemuel's son. They developed the water power and built in addition to the sawmill, a gristmill, paper mill, and a woolen (knitting) mill. They ran the mills as follows: Lemuel and Johiah the gristmill; Johiah the woolen mill, and Lemuel the paper and sawmill; Achel was a doctor and practiced at Middlefield Centre; Bethel went to Poultneyville. I don't know what Zira and Caleb did; but Zira built in 1811 the fine house on the west bank of Oaks Creek across from the mill

site and lived in it; a Zira, or Ira, made mill stones at Utica and went to St. Louis; Lemuel lived in the old Tubbs house and Johiah built, in 1805, and lived in the house across the road from, and east of the mills. Caleb's history he did not tell me. Augusta married one of the Carrs who were grantees of an adjoining four hundred acres; she and her husband lived in that beautiful old field-stone house on the road to Fly Creek, dated 1825.

Toddsville flourished and grew into a community of some hundreds, with upwards of sixty dwellings, churches, and shops, until modern competition and transportation killed its mills.

Samuel remembers my great-grandfather, Dr. Thomas Fuller, and told with glee how, in a particularly unhealthy year, Dr. Almy of Toddsville "beat" him; I didn't like to ask whether in deaths or cures. Dr. Almy bought and lived in Zira Todd's house and built the remarkable vault at the foot of the hill in his meadow, overlooking the field and the Oaks Creek. There, Samuel says, the doctor lies with his daughter. The outer doors are ajar but held by fallen masonry; the inner door of glass is securely closed. The vault interested me, so Samuel told its story as follows: Dr. Almy, he said, worshipped it and used to sit in the doorway and smoke evenings, and sometimes young Samuel sat with him; Mrs. Almy dreaded it, and made her son

promise that if she died first he would after his father's death, move her body to her family burying ground at Sharon; this, in due time, he did, and she lies there with the Mullers.

We had tried to get into the vault and I said, "Some night I am coming over to open it." After a moment's hesitation, old Samuel said: "One night, when I was young, I took a screw driver, got into the vault, and opened Mrs. Almy's coffin. She had been lying there some time, and her cheeks (indicating with his hands) were covered with blue mold!"

He said every one in those days went to the Presbyterian Church at Cooperstown, so when he was old enough to go to church he was taken there; he described the old high pews, taller than he was, and the two-story pulpit. The modern pews he spoke of contemptuously as "slips." He knew where all the old families sat—the Bowers, the Fullers, the Prentisses, etc., including the pew of my grandmother in which I suffered as a youth. He recalled Richard Cooper and old George Clarke and his wife, Ann, and about all the prominent residents of the village in those days including my grandfather.

It was like looking through an open window into the past.

Years ago Charles W. Smith, who married one of my mother's sisters, and lived to be nearly as old a man as

Samuel Todd, wrote out for me a little sketch of Hope Factory, and as it throws some light on Toddsville, I quote from it.

“He (Mr. Smith’s father) came with others, in 1806, after acquiring his trade, to Otsego County, New York, and engaged in building a cotton mill on the Oaks Creek at Toddsville, called the Union Cotton Manufactory. On December 21, 1808, he was specially commissioned to go east and purchase such machinery as was required for operating. Contract signed by Rufus Steere and Jehial Todd.

“The factory was built of wood and burned not many years after and was then replaced by one of stone.

“October, 1809, Mr. Smith was commissioned by the Union Cotton Mac’f’g. to build, manage, and carry on a cotton mill at Hopeville, having a long ditch to convey water from Oaks Creek, nearly half a mile, thus obtaining a higher head of water, more permanent and admitting use of an overshot, instead of a breast wheel for driving the mill. This was to be called Hope Factory after one of that name in Rhode Island.

“The building was of wood and was used some fifteen years. Mr. Smith’s salary was fixed at \$2.00 a day with firewood and pasturage for horse and cow.

“September 7, 1824, a new mill of stone was contracted for, to be erected a few rods from the old mill—by Lorenzo Bates, Contractor. Stone from the quar-



ries of J. R. M. Mills, Evander and Jared Ingalls. Twelve hundred bushels of lime furnished by Abram Van Horne. Carpenter and joining work by Elisha Thorneton and George Morris. Cost of this building was \$12,165.79 (\$12,165.79)."

This new mill of stone is the Hope Factory still standing near what is now known as Index.

Sometime after my talk with old Samuel Todd I had curious confirmation of the soundness of his memory. He said that the Todd land had come from "Fenimore Cooper" and that one Tubbs had intervened between William Cooper and their purchase. I doubted this and attempted to convince him that the land came from William through Tubbs. In looking over some old papers I found a contract of sale between Richard Fenimore Cooper, the eldest son of William Cooper, and Jehiel Todd of Northampton, Mass., dated January 22d, 1805, providing for the conveyance to Todd of "All that farm or tract of land known as Tubbs Mills" for the sum of "Six thousand three hundred and twenty silver dollars of the United States of America." Other papers show that the silver dollars were duly paid and the land conveyed by Richard Fenimore Cooper to Jehiel. The property must have been a very valuable one as the amount paid in 1805 would be the equivalent of a sum perhaps ten times as great now.

## JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

PRIOR to 1883, Susan Fenimore Cooper repeatedly promised me to write her recollections of her father, for her nephews and nieces; a promise which she started to fulfill that year by buying a blank book and writing an introductory note. She did little more for a number of years, until shortly before her death when she began seriously to write, but died before she had gotten beyond the early years of her life in Paris, about 1827 or 1828.

The following rather disconnected paragraphs I have selected to print here as throwing an intimate light on Fenimore Cooper's life and character, which appears nowhere else, and which ought to be preserved for his descendants.

My first recollections of my dear Father and Mother go back to the remote ages when we were living at "Fenimore," in the farm-house built by your grandfather. I was then about three years old. Some incidents of that time I remember with perfect distinctness, while the intervening weeks, or months, are a long blank.

Occasionally I was taken to the Hall to see my Grandmother, I have a dim recollection of her sitting near a little

table, at the end of the long sofa seen in her picture, with a book on the table. She always wore sleeves to the elbow, or little below, with long gloves. She took great delight in flowers, and the south end of the long hall was like a greenhouse in her time. She was a great reader of romances. She was a marvellous housekeeper, and beautifully nice and neat in all her arrangements.

The old negro seen in the picture of the Hall was an important personage in the family, he lived with my grandparents twenty years; his name was Joseph, but my Uncles often called him "the Governor." As you know he is buried in the family ground. His wife Harris married again after his death, and lies in the Churchyard, near the front fence. My Grandfather gave her a house and lot, on what is now Pine Street. Having no children she left that house to John Nelson. Harris lived, after my Grandmother's death, with the Russells.

The only one of my Uncles of whom I have any recollection was my Uncle Isaac. I remember him distinctly on one occasion, when he was dining at the farm-house; he took me up in his arms and wanted me to kiss him; but I was shy about it. "This young lady does not kiss gentlemen!" said your grandfather laughing. I seem to hear him say the words now, and I also recollect wondering in an infantile way what was their meaning. This is my only recollection of my Uncle Isaac. My Mother was much attached to him; he was very warm-hearted and affectionate, and very benevolent. On one occasion when your Grandfather was in the Navy, he came home on a furlough, and my Uncle Isaac gave a grand family dinner on the occasion. Your Grandfather would seem to have been something of a dandy in those days, he sported a *queue*, would you believe it! Some of the young naval officers at that time followed the fashion of Napoleon and Nelson, and sported that ap-

pendage. Judge of the excitement caused in the family, and in the village by the midshipman's pigtail! He soon threw it aside. But my Uncle Isaac by a successful manœuvre got possession of it on the day of the dinner party, and when the family assembled about the table, there, suspended to the chandelier was the young gentleman's pigtail! My Aunt Pomeroy told me the incident. My Uncle Isaac died early in consequence of an accident. He was paying a visit, with my Aunt Mary, to General Morris' family at the Butternuts, and one day after dinner was wrestling in fun with his brother-in-law Richard Morris, when he was thrown with some force against the railing of the piazza, injuring his spine. He lingered for a year or more, but abscesses formed, and he died at last of exhaustion.

My Mother always spoke kindly of her brothers-in-law. My Uncle William was wonderfully clever, quite a genius, a delightful talker, very witty. My Uncle Richard was a handsome man with remarkably fine manners; my Grandfather De Lancey, who had seen the best society in England said he was "a very well bred man." He was very intimate with Mr. Gouldsborough Banyer, and named his eldest son after him. My Uncle Sam was clever, but undersized, and eccentric. My Mother has often said they were all fine tempered men.

There was a romantic mystery hanging over the Lake at that time—a mysterious bugle was heard in the summer evenings, and moonlight nights—now from the Lake, now from the wooded mountain opposite "Fenimore." "There is the bugle!" my Father would call out, and all the family would collect on the little piazza to listen. I remember hearing the bugle frequently, and being aware, in a baby fashion, of the excitement on the subject. No one knew the performer. It was some mysterious stranger haunting



the mountain opposite "Fenimore," for several months. So my Aunt Pomeroy told me in later years.

My Father played the flute, in those days! His flute remained among the family possessions for some years.

Family Lake parties were frequent in those days—they always went to the Point, which your Great-Grandfather had selected for that purpose only a few years after the village was founded.

My Aunt Pomeroy has told me that the first Lake party she remembered took place when she was quite a young girl, the Lake was almost entirely surrounded with forest. Game was still abundant, and on that occasion the gentlemen of the party pursued and killed a deer in the Lake. Bears and wolves were common then, and panthers also. The bears would lie dormant in the caves on the hill sides, and my Aunt said she had often heard the wolves howl on the ice in the Lake, in winter. The first Lake Party was given by my Grandfather to some friends from Philadelphia. A beech-tree was chosen, on the Point, and the initials of the party carved on it. I have seen the tree, and the initials of my Grandfather and Grandmother, W. C. and E. C., cut in the bark. But it has long since vanished.

About the same time that the first Lake party took place there was a terrific fire in the forest, my Aunt said there was a circle of flames entirely surrounding the Lake, and apparently closing in about the village to the southward, as the woods came very near the little town at that time. There was serious alarm for a day or two. At night she said the spectacle was very fine. But everybody was anxious. Happily a heavy rain quenched the flames before they reached the little village.

In winter there was a great deal of skating. My Uncle Richard, and my Uncle William were particularly accomplished in that way, very graceful in their movements, and

cutting very intricate figures on the ice. So I have been told.

We had not been long at Mamaroneck when a change in the family plans took place. Instead of returning to Cooperstown, after a six months visit, it was decided that my father should build a country-house on a farm that was destined for my Mother by my Grandfather. This farm was on a hill in Scarsdale, four miles from Mamaroneck. The question once decided my Father went to work with his usual eagerness and in a few months the house was built, and we took possession. The farm was called Angevine, the name of the Huguenot tenants who had preceeded us. The view from the hill was fine, including a long stretch of the Sound, and Long Island beyond. The house consisted of a centre, and two wings, one of these was the common sitting room, the other was the "drawing-room." Little did my dear Father foresee when he planned and built that room, that within its walls he should write a book, and become an author! In general his thoughts seem to have turned upon ships, and the sea, and farming, and landscape gardening. I can remember trotting around after him while he was planning a sweep, and a ha-ha fence,—a novelty in those days. He set out many trees.

During the winter after we had taken possession there was a grand house-warming party. As I look back the rooms seem to me to have been crowded with gaily dressed ladies, and their cavaliers. I particularly remember my Aunt Caroline, wearing a pink silk spencer, and dancing. And this was the only occasion in which I ever saw my Father dance.

My Father was much interested in Agricultural matters in those days. He belonged to the Ag. Soc. of the County, and I remember the making of a flag to be hoisted at the annual fair; there was a *black plough*, and the words West

Chester Agricultural Society in large, black letters on the white ground, a joint effort of genius on the part of Father and Mother, while two little girls looked on in admiration. But our Father figured also as a military character at that time; Governor Clinton made him his aide-de-camp, with the rank of Colonel, and more than once we little girls had the pleasure of admiring him in full uniform, blue and buff, cocked hat and sword, mounted on Bull-head before proceeding to some review. He was thus transferred from the naval to the land service. To the last days of his life, Mr. James de Peyster Ogden, one of his New York friends never omitted giving him his title of "Colonel." He thus became one of the numerous army of American Colonels, though not one of the ordinary type certainly.

He always read a great deal, in a desultory way. Military works, travels, Biographies, History—and novels! He frequently read aloud at that time to my Mother, in the quiet evenings at Angevine. Of course the books were all English. A new novel had been brought from England in the last *monthly packet*; it was I think one of Mrs. Opie's or one of that school. My Mother was not well, she was lying on the sofa, and he was reading this newly imported novel to her; it must have been very trashy; after a chapter or two he threw it aside exclaiming, "*I could write you a better book than that myself!*" Our Mother laughed at the idea as the height of absurdity—he who disliked writing even a letter, that he should write a book! He persisted in his declaration however, and almost immediately wrote the first pages of a tale, not yet named, the scene laid in England, as a matter of course.

He soon became interested, and amused with the undertaking, drew a regular plot, talked over the details with our Mother, and resolved to imitate the tone, and character of an English tale of the ordinary type. After a few chapters



were written he would have thrown it aside, but our dear Mother encouraged him, to persevere, why not finish it, why not print it? This last idea amused him greatly. He usually wrote in the drawing-room, and after finishing a chapter always brought my Mother in to hear it. One day he left the room, the door was open and I went in, and retired under the writing-table which was covered with a cloth, for a play with my doll. Father and Mother came in together. I went on playing quietly with my doll. The reading of a chapter of *Precaution* began. This interested me greatly; it was Chapter . . . Suddenly I burst into tears, and sobbed aloud over the woes of . . . Father and Mother were amazed, I was withdrawn from my tent, but they could not imagine what had distressed me. On one of his visits to New York, in those days, my Father bought a large green port-folio for himself, and a red one for my Mother. The red one is now among my papers, in a dilapidated condition.

When *Precaution* was completed we set out for a visit to Bedford, for the especial purpose of reading the M.S. to the Jay family. My mother wished the book to be printed, my Father had some doubts on the subject, and at last it was decided that if his friends the Jays listened with interest to the reading, the printing should take place. Mrs. Banyer's taste and judgment were considered of especial importance in deciding a literary question. We made the little journey in the gig; Father, Mother, Susie and *Precaution*. For my part I greatly enjoyed the visit, playing with Anna and Maria Jay. The reading went on in the parlour, while we little people were in the nursery. Governor Jay, venerable in appearance as in character was one of the audience. With his grand children I used to go up and kiss him for good-night, every evening. The audience approved, although only one or two knew the secret of the



authorship; the M.S. was supposed to be written by a friend of my Father. There was a Miss McDonald, a friend of the Jays staying with them at the time, she declared the book quite interesting, but it was not new, "I am sure I have read it before," she declared—this the author considered as a complimentary remark, as he aimed at close imitation of the Opie School of English novels. Bedford was at that time a delightful house to visit at, child as I was it made this impression on me. My Father and Judge Jay were always very intimate, they had been school-boys together. Mrs. Banyer was also a warm friend of my parents. Her husband Mr. Gouldsbrough Banyer had been an intimate friend of my Uncle Richard Cooper; Mrs. Banyer's wedding trip was to Cooperstown, and she always spoke with pleasure and interest of her visit to the old Hall; the view of the Lake she declared to be lovely from the house at that time.

When *Precaution* was published some months later, it was generally supposed to have been written in England, and by a lady. Many persons thought it was written by Miss Anne De Lancey, my Mother's sister, who afterwards married Mr. John Loudon McAdam, the great engineer of roads. This sister my Mother had never seen! When my grand-parents returned to America after the Revolution, their eldest child was left in England with her Uncle and Aunt, Judge and Mrs. Jones; Judge Jones was the brother of my grandmother, he took the name of Jones from , he was born a Floyd. Mrs. Jones was my grandfather's sister, Miss Anne De Lancey. They were both great Tories, and could not be induced to return to America, and begged that their little niece might be left with them for a time at least. So the child was left with them, and my grand-parents sailed with their little boy Thomas, and his nurse, "Nanny"—our dear old Nanny of

later days. My Grandfather considered himself an American, not an Englishman, and now that the war was over decided to cast in his lot with his native country. They lived in New York for a time, at the City Hotel, which belonged to my Grandfather. When we were living in the Rue St. Dominique at Paris, one of our opposite neighbors was the duc de Valmy, Gen. Kellerman; he one day asked my Father if he had ever known a *Madame de Lancé*, in New York, remarking that he had spent some time at the City Hotel, and there became acquainted with *M. and Mme. de Lancé*, the lady he said was one of the most beautiful women he had ever seen. My Aunt Anne grew up a fierce Tory, and after the death of her Uncle and Aunt Jones, could never be induced to come to America, which was a great grief to my grand-parents. She was now credited with writing *Precaution*, a book it was said, clearly written in England, and by a woman!

*Precaution* having been quite as successful as he expected the writer now planned another book. It was to be thoroughly American, the scene laid in West-Chester Co. during the Revolution. An anecdote which Governor Jay had told him relating to a spy, who performed his dangerous services out of pure patriotism, was the foundation of the new book.

My Father never knew the name of the Spy; Governor Jay felt himself bound to secrecy on that point. But he never for a moment believed that Enoch Crosby was the man. Various individuals, twenty years later, claimed to have been the original Harvey Birch. One man even asserts that Mr. Cooper used to visit at his house frequently, for the purpose of hearing his adventures and then writing them out in the Spy. This is utterly false. From only one person did my Father ever receive any information connected with the life of the Spy who was the dim original

of Harvey Birch, and that person was Governor Jay. The conversation on the piazza at Bedford relating to the patriot spy occurred a long time before my Father dreamed of writing a book.

When he had fully made up his mind to write a novel entirely American, whose scene should be laid in West Chester during the Revolution, he amused himself by going among the old farmers of the neighborhood and hearing all the gossip of those old times, about the "Neutral Ground" on which we were then living, the ground between the English in New York, and American forces northward. Frequently he would invite some old farmer to pass the evening in the parlour at Angevine, and while drinking cider and eating hickory nuts, they would talk over the battle of White Plains, and all the skirmishes of the Cow-Boys and Skinners. Many such evenings do I remember, as I sat on a little bench beside my Mother, while Uncle John Hatfield, or George Willis, or one of the Cornells related the stirring adventures of those days of the Revolution. There was a shallow cave in the rocky ledge on the road to Mamaronock where a Tory spy had been concealed, and was stealthily fed for some time. And on the road to New Rochelle there was a grove where a sharp skirmish had taken place, it was called the Haunted Wood—Ghosts had been seen there! The cave and the grove were full of tragic interest to me, whenever we passed them.

Every chapter of the *Spy* was read to my Mother as soon as it was written, and the details of the plot were talked over with her. From the first months of authorship, to the last year of his life, my Father generally read what he wrote to my Mother.

The *Spy* when it appeared was brilliantly successful. Never before had an American book attained anything like the same success.



During those years at Angevine our education began. Our dear Mother was our Governess, and from time to time our Father examined us. We were "in school" two hours, the three elder ones, Susie, Cally and Charley, sitting round our Mother in the parlour, or dining-room, while the author and the *Spy* were occupying the drawing-room. Charley could read when she was three years old. There was spelling, and writing, and arithmetic, and geography, and Mrs. Trimener's Bible Lessons, and the History of England. Well do I remember those school hours. Our precious Mother was so loving and patient with us. I seem to hear her sweet musical voice now as she talked with us. She had a remarkably sweet voice in conversation; my friend Mrs. Hamilton Fish said to me one day years ago, "I always thought that when novelists spoke of the musical voices of their heroines in conversation it was pure romance, but Mrs. Cooper's voice is melody itself."

Meanwhile writing was going on. The printing would seem to have been a slower business than it is to-day. The new book was to give a picture of American life in a new *settlement*, shortly after the Revolution, and the scene was laid at Cooperstown, on Lake Otsego. Some of the characters were drawn from real life, but the plot was purely fiction. Monsieur Le Quoi, Major Hartman, Ben Pump were actual colonists on Lake Otsego. Natty Bumppo was entirely original, with the exception of his *leathern stockings*, which were worn by a very prosaic old hunter, of the name of Shipman, who brought game to the Hall. Mr. Grant was *not* Father Nash.

The house your Grandfather had rented was one of two recently built by the Patroon, on Broadway, just above Prince Street. It was then almost "out of town." Directly opposite to us was a modest two story house occupied by John Jacob Astor. Niblo's Gardens now occupys the site



of the house in which we lived. Not far above us was the very grand "Gothic edifice" St. Thomas Church, considered an architectural gem in those days! Next door to us was a Boarding School, one of the best in New York, the principal was Mrs. Isabella Holt. Here Cally and I became pupils. There were some very nice girls in the school, Miss Elizabeth Fish, Miss Rutgers, Miss Morewood, all older than we were, and the Langdons, grand-daughters of Mr. Astor who were about our age. Here we sat with our feet in the stocks—here I became very intimate with the Kings of Egypt, and the great men of Greece. Here if we were disorderly, or our nails were not properly cleaned we were obliged to wear a *real pig's-foot* tied around our neck! One tragic morning Miss Morewood, the oldest girl, eighteen, and a perfect pupil, left her work lying about, and was condemned to wear the pig's foot! Mrs. Holt shed a tear, Miss Morewood wept, and I fancy we all cried—but stern justice was administered—the pig's foot was worn by the model pupil! These young ladies often were escorted from school by their beaux. Miss Rutgers, now Mrs. —, and a grandmother has been in Cooperstown lately. On one occasion I was told to write a composition on the difference between the characters of Washington and Franklin—your Grandfather no sooner learned the subject allotted to me, than he took his hat, walked in to Mrs. Holt's and remonstrated on the folly of giving such a task to a child of nine. That composition was never written.

In those days your Grandfather saw frequently many officers of the army, and navy. I remember on one occasion his bringing General Scott home to dinner, and my amazement at his great height—as he stood at the window he looked out of the upper sash. Your Grandfather was also partial to the society of artists, all painters, there was no American sculptor in those days. Mr. Dunlap, and

Mr. Cole, I remember especially. I remember being taken to see a picture of great size, Death on the White Horse, painted by Mr. Dunlap. It was about this time that my Father planned and founded a Club to which he gave the name of the "Lunch." It met every Thursday evening, I think at the house of Abigail Jones, a coloured cook famous at that day, who kept the Delmonico's of that date. Most of the prominent men of ability and character in New York belonged to the club, which also through its members, invited strangers of distinction. Conversation was the object, I do not think there was any card-playing. The evening closed with a good supper, one of the members being caterer every Thursday, while Abigail Jones carried out the programme to perfection in the way of cooking. Your Grandfather, when caterer, wore a gilt key at his buttonhole. He was very social in his tastes and habits, and full of spirited conversation, and delighted in these lunch meetings. Officers of the Army and Navy, the prominent Clergy, Lawyers, Physicians, Merchants, &c., &c., belonged to the Club. Bishop Hobart was a frequent guest.

In the following spring we moved to Beach Street, near Greenwich Street, to a house belonging to our Mother's cousin Henry Floyd Jones of Fort Neck. He and my Father were very intimate. Several years before her marriage your Grandmother came near losing her life from this cousin's carelessness. He was staying at Heathcote Hill and taking up a gun—there were always several in the gun-rack in the hall—he aimed it at his cousin Susan, threatening to shoot her. The gun was loaded—he had believed it unloaded—the full charge of shot went into the wall, *very near* my Mother's head, as she stood within a few feet of her cousin. Cousin Henry was almost distracted at the thought of the risk she had run. It was a rule of my Grandfather's that

every gun carried by the sportsmen, should be discharged before it was brought into the house. But on that occasion the rule had been carelessly broken.

One day, as I was sitting near my Mother your Grandfather came into the room, with the Cooperstown paper in his hand, and without speaking pointed out a passage to her, and then left the room. My dear Mother looked sad. It was the burning of the house at Fenimore which was reported in the *Freeman's Journal*. The stone house was very nearly finished, and was valued at \$3500. There were many incendiary fires in Cooperstown at that time, all contrived it was said by one unprincipled man. Your Grandfather soon after sold the property at Fenimore.

One day, at a dinner-party at Mr. Wilkes' the recently published novel "by the author of Waverly," the *Pirate*, was the subject of conversation. Several of the party insisted that the book could not have been written by a landsman. Your Grandfather thought differently, and declared that a sailor would have been more accurate, and made more of the nautical portions of the book. No one agreed with him; they thought that great skill had been shown by merely touching on the sea passages, to have enlarged them would have ruined the book: "Impossible to interest the reader deeply in a novel where the sea was introduced too freely." Your Grandfather declared that a novel where the principal events should pass on the Ocean, with ships and sailors for the machinery might be made very interesting. There was a general outcry. Mr. Wilkes himself a man of literary tastes, and very partial to your Grandfather, shook his head decidedly. Nevertheless at that very moment the author of the *Spy* resolved to write a clearly nautical novel. On his way home he sketched the outline, and arrived at his house told your Grandmother of his plan. He always talked over his literary plans with her. The *Pilot*



was soon commenced, and when published proved brilliantly successful.

Our cousin Gouldsbrough Cooper, my Uncle Richard's eldest son, paid us a visit during the winter. Officers of the Army and Navy, Artists, and literary men, were frequently at the house. I particularly remember Mr. Bryant, Mr. Halleck, and Mr. Perceval the poet, as guests at dinner. Also Mr. Cole the artist. Dr. DeKay was also a frequent companion of your Grandfather's. Mr. Gilbert Saltonstall a college companion of your Grandfather's, whose home was in New England staid at the house repeatedly; he was a very clever man. On one occasion when Lieutenant Commander Shubrick was going away after passing a week or two with us, he proposed to my little sister Fanny to go with him; she was all ready for the elopement, trotted upstairs, put together a few articles of her wardrobe, tied them up in a handkerchief, and trotted down to the parlour all ready for the journey; Captain Shubrick was delighted with her readiness to go with him and frequently alluded to it in later years.

With the spring came another movement to the country. This time to Hallett's Cove, to a farm house belonging to Col Gibbs, a friend of my Father, whose fine house and grounds were close at hand. The place was called Sunswick and was opposite Blackwell's Island. It was thoroughly country then, with only an occasional farm house in the neighborhood. We had a beautiful little cow, "Betty," and a farm waggon, with black horses, in which my Father drove us about. He frequently took us to a pleasant sandy beach, where we children picked up many pretty shells, and where we all bathed. There was a wooded point at one end of the beach where we loitered in shade, enjoying the breeze. A few years later Dr. Muhlenberg built his College on that point. Sunswick is now the city of Astoria!



Our Father had a little sloop of his own, anchored at the wharf, near the house; he called it the *Van Tromp*, and went to New York in it almost daily. Frequently I went with him, resting until the turn of the tide, at Mr. Wiley's bookstore. Was this in Wall St.? I remember distinctly the abominable taste of the water, brought to me when I was thirsty, from a pump in the street. For many years longer New Yorkers drank only very unpleasant water from the street pumps.

In the autumn a grand event occurred. The completing of the Erie Canal. There was a great procession in New York, which we saw from the windows of 345 Greenwich St. Every trade was represented in the line, with appropriate banners, and devices. One carriage in passing our house made an especial demonstration; it contained gentlemen, several of whom had on the ends of their uplifted canes slices of *bread and cheese*, members of Father's Club, the Lunch, no doubt.

Our Father after winding up his business in New York, went to Washington, in company with the Prince of Canino, Charles Bonaparte, the celebrated naturalist with whom he was quite intimate. While he was in Washington Mr. Clay offered him the position of Minister to Sweden, but he did not wish to be tied to a diplomatic life. He preferred a Consulship, as he wished to remain identified with the country, and thought that position would be a protection to his family in case of troubles in Europe. The chief object in his going to Washington was to see more of a large deputation of Indian chiefs, from the Western tribes, of whom he had seen much while they were in New York. He had become much interested in them, and studied them closely. They were chiefly Pawnees and Sioux, and among them was Petelasharoo, a very fine specimen of a warrior, a remarkable man in every way. The army officers in charge of this

deputation told him many interesting facts connected with those tribes. He had already decided upon a new romance, connected with the mounted tribes on the Prairies.

The 1st of June, 1826, the author of the *Spy* embarked in the good ship Hudson, with all his family, including his nephew William, the son of his brother William, whom he had adopted. We were five weeks at sea, landing at Cowes, in the Isle of Wight, on the 4th of July.

One day as we went home, our dear Mother said, "Who do you suppose has been here this morning? Sir Walter Scott!" Sir Walter had just arrived in Paris, seeking materials for his *Life of Napoleon*. It was very kind in him to call on your Grandfather so soon. They had some interesting interviews.

The same morning General Lafayette made a long call on my Father. But that was a common occurrence.

While Sir Walter Scott was in Paris the Princess Galitzin gave him a very grand reception. It was a great event of the winter, all the fashionable people of Paris were there. Sir Walter says in his diary, "the Scotch and American lions, took the field together." But of course Sir Walter was the lion in chief. All the ladies wore Scotch plaids as dresses, scarfs, ribbons, &c., &c.

The Princess Galitzin was an elderly lady, very clever, a very kind friend of your Grandfather and Grandmother and a great writer of notes, full of the *eloquence du billet*, but in the most crabbed of handwriting. She had a married daughter, and a married son living in Paris at that time. Her daughter-in-law, the Princess Marie was a charming young lady, sweet and gentle though the daughter of that rough old hero Marshall Suwarrow who when needing rest, *took off his spurs* on going to bed. Madame de Zerzé, the Princess' daughter, gave a brilliant child's party, to which we four little sisters were invited. Your father, my dear

Jim, had not yet put on his dancing shoes. Another child's party, a very brilliant affair, I remember, given by Madame de Vivien for her grand-daughters Mesdemoiselles de Lostange. The whole Hotel was open, and brilliantly lighted, and a company of cuirassiers in full uniform were on guard in the court, and adjoining street, to keep order among the coachmen and footmen. That was the most brilliant affair of the kind that I ever attended in my childish days.

A naval officer, formerly his commander when he was stationed on Lake Ontario, Captain Woolsey was a frequent companion of my Father during the first winter at Paris. They one day undertook to walk around the outer walls of Paris, and accomplished the feat successfully. The distance was, I think, eighteen miles.

John Bull was very civil to your Grandfather, so far as London Society went. He dined with prominent M. P.s, prominent Peers, and even with Cabinet Ministers. He soon became quite intimate with Mr. Rogers the Poet, they were much together, and enjoyed each other's society. Mr. Rogers was very clever, and witty, and had a charming *bijou* of a house, full of curiosities; in his dining room was a mahogany side board made for him by a journey man cabinet maker, later the celebrated sculptor *Chantrey*!

In the month of July 1828, just two years after we entered Paris, we took leave of our dear Governesses, and school friends in the Rue St. Maur, and set out in a roomy family carriage, coachman's box in front, rumble behind, with our faces towards Switzerland and Italy. We travelled post,—much the pleasantest of all modes of travelling. No doubt the palace cars of the present day are very grand and luxurious; but grandeur and luxury often leave much real pleasantness out of sight. The postillions were very comical in appearance, wearing huge clumsy boots, that covered



their entire legs, and were stuffed with straw! Occasionally we were treated to *ropes* in the harness. My father often sat on the coachman's box, and I well remember his delight at the first sight of Mt. Blanc, like a brilliant white cloud, sixty miles away! He stopped the carriage, and invited my dear mother to take a seat beside him. He was also in a state of *loosey moosey* over the mists which clung to the Jura mountains, after we had once entered Switzerland. We were soon settled in a pleasant country house near Berne, la Lorraine, which had been recently occupied by the ex-king of Holland, Louis Buonaparte, after the crown had fallen from his head,—as all Napoleon's crowns were doomed to fall. It was a very simple house, with deal floors, a stiff little garden in front, with a stiff little fountain, quite waterless, as its sole ornament. But Oh the sublime view of the Alps from the windows—the whole range of the Oberland Alps, so grand beyond description, so beautiful beyond description, and constantly varying in their grandeur, and their beauty. In the rear of the house was a natural terrace where all walked almost every evening, parents and children, enjoying the noble view. It was on that terrace that my father taught Paul to fly his first kite, which he had made for him. Farmer Walther who had charge of the property had many interesting talks with his tenant on subjects political, and military; he was very indignant at the robbery of the Treasury of the Canton of Berne by one of Napoleon's Marshals. But then Napoleon while grand in other ways, was grand also at Robbery. Of course we made acquaintance with the Bears of Berne in their fosse. I doubt if many travellers enjoyed Switzerland more then your Grandfather did, he was in a perpetual state of *loosey moosey*, over the grand, and the beautiful in that Alpine region. He made many excursions among the mountains, alone with guide and Alpenstock,



with William, or occasionally in a carriage with my dear mother, William and myself. There were very few Americans travelling in Switzerland in those years. Only two came to Berne during the summer we passed there, Mr. Ray, and Mr. Low, of New York.

In October we took a sentimental leave of la Lorraine, and moved southward to Florence. We travelled *Veturino* in the family calèche, with four fine horses, and a fine old cuirassier of Napoleon's wars for postillion, followed by a *fourgon* which carried our baggage, and had a hooded seat in front, occupied by William and Paul's nurse. The *fourgon* had only two horses, and a subaltern, Caspar, for a postillion. We crossed the Simplon before the snow fell. Your Grandfather was much interested in the great engineering work of Napoleon, which crossed the Simplon with such a fine broad road.

We were soon in Italy, dear delightful Italy. We paid our homage to the beautiful Cathedral at Milan, paid our respects to San Carlo Borromeo, and the Lago Maggiore, halted for a day or two at Bologna, crossed the Appenines, and were soon at the gates of Florence. Your Grandfather fell in love with Italy at first sight. And it was a love which lasted through his lifetime. For Switzerland he had a great admiration; for Italy he had a warm affection, which neither beggars, nor bandits could chill. The very atmosphere of Italy was a delight to him.

We were soon provided with a home of our own in Florence.

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I am adding to these recollections the following verses, to preserve them and what is known of their history. Years ago I found the unsigned and undated

manuscript among my grandfather's papers; it was in his handwriting but bore nothing to identify the writer, or the name of the friend to whom it is addressed. We concluded that it was written by him and thought that possibly it was on the death of his Secretary William Cooper, who died in Paris.

In the summer of 1920 my sisters, who for many years have spent several months at Murray Bay, Canada, were told that, written on a piece of paper in a book in the library of the Manor house, was a copy of these verses, dated and signed as below, but with nothing to indicate the name of the person to whom they are addressed.

Fenimore Cooper visited Leghorn at about the time of the date. The only suggestion that I can make as to the "messmate" is that it may have been Captain Woolsey who is mentioned in the foregoing notes as having been in Paris in 1826 or 1827.

LEGHORN—5TH. MARCH—1829

Sleep on in peace within thy foreign grave,  
Companion of my young and laughing hour—  
Thought bears me hence to wild Ontario's wave—  
To other scenes, to time when hope had power.

Then life to us was like yon glittering main  
Viewed in the calm, beneath its sunny skies,  
Then impulse bound the mind in pleasure's chain,  
And colors rose in gold before the eyes.

We based our rocks of fame on moving seas,  
To us their trackless paths were beaten ways—  
The spirit stirring gale, the milder breeze,  
The battle's carnage teemed with laurel'd praise—

But twice ten wiser years have drawn a ray  
Of austere truth athwart this treacherous sphere,  
To me life stands exposed, yet I obey  
Its luring smile—Thou—sleeppest ever here—

J. Fenimore Cooper

visited the grave of his old messmate.

Dec<sup>ber</sup> 6th 1828

Copied Leghorn  
March 5th. 1829.

## OTSEGO HALL

THE following description of Otsego Hall and its predecessor, called the Manor House, was begun by J. Fenimore Cooper in a blank book, with the intention of writing a complete history of the Hall. This idea he abandoned and the leaves on which the following was written were cut out. I found them among other old papers and print them with all the blanks unfilled.

### CONSTRUCTION &c.

At the original settlement of Cooperstown, The proprietor William Cooper, laid out a plot of ground for his own residence in the centre of the village. This plot faced on *Fair Street*, and extended half way from Second to Third Street. It was enclosed with a picket fence, and contained about an acre and a half of land. In 1788, Judge Cooper erected a wooden building, nearly on a line with Second Street, and directly in front of Fair Street or nearly on the line of the present (1840) wall. This house was of two stories, and had a wing at each end. A few years later, an addition was annexed to the rear. A good representation of it is to be seen in the original map, where the house is called Manor House. It was a roughly built house, but good for the country, and the times. This house was temporarily inhabited by Judge Cooper, in 1789, but his



family did not remove to it, until Oct. 1790. In this house, in 179 was born Henry Frey Cooper the youngest child of William Cooper and Elizabeth Fenimore, who died at Burlington, New Jersey, when only nine months old. At this time, The garden was near the house, a little to the east of it, The asparagus bed, being near the present Bank. The barns and stables were on the north side of Second Street, in the rear of the stone store built by N. Worthington.

Lombardy poplars were introduced into the country by Judge Cooper, about the year 1796 who caused several rows of them to be set out in his grounds, to form avenues to the new building. A few of the apple trees were found in the lot, having been planted by the Indians or by Col. Croghan, The old deputy superintendent of Indian affairs, but most of them were set out and grafted about the year 1795. An Englishman of the name of Zeb did the grafting.

M. de Tallyrand visited Cooperstown, in the year 1795, and passed several days with Judge Cooper, in the old house.

In 1796 Judge Cooper made his contracts for the construction of the Hall. The stone for the foundation was obtained from the fields, on the farm of Luce, no quarries having then been opened in the mountains. The bricks were made at the outlet, the clay having been brought from The Housman Lot, on the west side of the Lake. The lime was also made at the outlet. When the Hall was commenced, Judge Cooper extended the grounds Through to Third Street, and he opened a lane from West Street, to communicate with new barns &c. That he had built on a lot that communicated with the grounds, west and north of the house. The foundation of the Hall was laid in the summer of 1797, and the walls of the house were

run up, and the building enclosed in that of 1798. The roof was raised, 1798. The interior was finished in the course of the following spring. The family moved into the house in June 1799.

According to the original distribution, the great hall was used as a room, and was furnished in a very general way. A piano stood between the window and door on the north-east corner, a side board between the two next doors, on the same side, a dining table between the two next, and a tea-table, between the last door and the window. In the southwest corner stood an old fashioned clock, and near it, another sewing table. A long settee covered with chintz stood between the two doors on that side, and a large hand organ between the most northern of the doors and the window. There were two small chandeliers in the hall, and it was warmed by a large tin plate stove that stood in the centre. There were also gilt branches on the door casings, and busts in the pediments. The window seats were generally filled with books.

The northwest room was intended for a dining room, and there is now a trap door in it, that was made for passing up dishes from below, but the hall proving to be so great a favorite, this room, as commanding a view of the lake, was used as a drawing room. It was very seldom opened, however, never, indeed, unless at some family festival. This room is very little altered from what it was in 1798, The paper alone having been renewed and a new ceiling made. The original paper was a delicate vine, with a straw colored back ground.

The southwest room was called the dining room, but it may be questioned if a table was ever set in it, during the lives of Judge Cooper and his wife. The paper was figured, with a red background, and exceedingly ugly. In other respects, this room is much as it used to be. Though it was not oaked.

The northeast room was used by Mrs. William Cooper, as a bed-room; the bed standing in the south-west corner. The paint was *blue*, and the paper sombre. In that day, it was the custom to paint The wood-work different colours.

The stairs were straight, steep, and mean. They were very difficult of ascent and even dangerous; the carpenters appearing to have no idea of a landing. The paper of the little passage was like that of the hall.

The house was divided into six large rooms on the second floor. The garret stairs were directly over those below, and there were two windows in the east end of the building one to light the little passage, and the other to light the corridors, up stairs, which reached to the doors of the two western chambers. As these two chambers were much the largest in the house, They were kept for company. That in the centre, on the north side, was the young men's room, and occupied by the two oldest sons, when at home; that opposite was a storeroom, with a bed for any familiar acquaintance. Each of these rooms had three windows. The northeast room was occupied by the two daughters, Hannah and Ann, and the room opposite by the boys, William and James.

As soon as the old house was vacant, it was removed down the street, far enough to permit a view of the Lake, and was subsequently converted into stores. In the end, it was consumed by fire.

The southeast door in the great hall communicated with the pantry, which was large, and contained The second window on that side of the building. A door opened from the little passage, into a room behind the pantry. That was called the library. This room had two windows; one on the east, and one on the south, and the book cases stood in a recess, between the end of the pantry and the partition beyond.



The kitchen garden was made, about the year 1800, at the south-east corner of the lot, and a small vine yard was made in the hollow next to the street. Fences ran from the two southern corners of the house to Third Street, and the enclosure was converted into a flower garden. The remainder of the grounds were either in fruit, or laid out in squares divided by straight, formal gravel walks.

The house was originally painted red and lined, so as to show the bricks. The roof was painted red, and had a light wooden railing. About the year 1800, a low stone addition, of the height of the foundation, was run out towards the east, to the offices &c. and as a laundry. In the year 1803, another of the same height and material was put on the west end, and was used as an office.

The summer of 1799, the following winter, and the summer of 1800 were all exceedingly gay, with the exception that Judge Cooper was absent, in Philadelphia, where Congress then sat.

It ought to have been said that in front of the house was a stone stoop, with a slight pediment supported by four slender columns, and in the rear a low wooden one with seats.

On the morning of the 10th September, Richard Feni-more Cooper, the eldest son of Judge Cooper accompanied by his eldest sister, Hannah, left the Hall, on horseback to cross the hills on a visit to the Morrisises at the Butternuts. Miss Cooper was mounted on a spirited imported English blooded mare, and when about a mile from the end of her journey, the mare suddenly jumped aside at a dog, threw its rider, and killed Miss Cooper, on the spot. This young lady was just two and twenty, and was esteemed and loved by all who knew her. Few young women of her age, ever died more lamented. Her body was conveyed to the residence of General Morris, and that night Mr. Richard



Morris brought the sad intelligence to the Hall. On the night of the 11th the body arrived, and was placed in its coffin, on the *Fenimore Table* as it is called, in the dining-room (now the library, 1840) near the wall, and on the right hand, on entering the room. On the 12th the body was removed into the Hall, and placed between the two southern doors on the east side, leaving room for a row of chairs next the wall. The Rev. Mr. Nash preached a sermon, standing near the pantry door, and the hall was filled with people. Judge Cooper, Richard Fenimore, Samuel, and James Fenimore, were all the members of the family present, Isaac being in Philadelphia, and William at Princeton College. Mrs. Cooper and her daughter Ann, were in the room of the former. The procession left the house by the front door, and the body was interred in the present family burying ground. A slab was placed over The grave, made of the common stone of the country (quarries had then been opened) and The inscription on it was written, by Judge Cooper. This slab does not contain The name of the deceased, or any date whatever. The death of Miss H. Cooper was The first that had occurred in the family at Cooperstown. Judge Cooper, however, had lost several children previously to removing to Cooperstown, Their names were Amos, Abraham, Elizabeth, two that were never named, and Henry Frey. Henry Frey was the only child of Judge Cooper's who was born in Cooperstown, and he died and was buried at Burlington, New Jersey. Until the death of Miss Cooper, a sort of superstition prevailed in the family, That all were to die and be buried at Burlington.

On the                      of                      , Richard Fenimore Cooper was married to Ann Low Carey. Richard Fenimore was the eldest child of William Cooper and Elizabeth Fenimore and Ann Low was the second daughter of Richard Carey of

Springfield, Otsego County and Ann Low, his wife, of New York, The bride and bridegroom reached the Hall, on the day of the wedding, and they took possession of the southwestern room. Judge Cooper, at this time, was absent in Washington, where Congress then sat. The winter of 1880-1 was less gay, at the Hall, Than the preceding, on account of the death of Miss Cooper, but several young ladies passed a portion of it there. Among them were Miss Mary Ann Morris and Miss Eliza Carey.

This year, and the two or three that succeeded, The vineyard produced very good grapes but cold winters killed the vines about the year 1804. The plums of the garden were very celebrated from 1796 to 1808 &c. &c.

In the course of The year 1801, Richard Fenimore Cooper took possession of his own home at Apple Hill, being the first of the family who quitted The paternal residence. At this time, Isaac Cooper was in Philadelphia, in the counting-house of        & Bancker, William at Princeton College; James at school with Rev. Tho. Ellison, rector of St. Peter's Albany; Samuel and Ann at home. The latter, however, passed he winter of 1801-2 in Philadelphia.

Isaac Cooper was married to Mary Ann Morris 25th Dec. 1804, and, on reaching the Hall, a few days after The marriage, They occupied The        . In 1805, They removed to The house at the west corner of Second and fair streets, since destroyed by fire. On the occasion of this wedding, The drawing room was opened, for company, for the second time, The death of Miss Cooper having prevented This from occurring except on great occasions.

Miss Ann Cooper, The only surviving daughter of Judge Cooper, was married on the        of May 1803 to George Pomeroy, and continued to reside in the Hall, until the close of the following year, when they removed to their own house, corner of Second and Water Street. This marriage

took place in The hall, near the spot where the dining table is usually set, The Rev. Isaac Lewis officiating. This is the first marriage That ever occurred in the house. The young couple occupied The room now called New Jersey. In this room, on the                      of                      eve was born William Cooper Pomeroy, the first child ever born in the building. He died at his father's house                      , 1807.

After the removal of Isaac Cooper to the house in Second Street, the family in the Hall usually consisted of only Judge Cooper, his wife, and their fourth son Samuel; William residing in New York and James being either at college, or at sea. At this time, The domestics, indoors were reduced to The *Governor*, as he was called, a hired black man; Sarah the cook; and Betty, the chambermaid.

1808 William Cooper was married to Eliza Clason, at the county house of the lady's father, on the East River, and in the course of the season They paid their first visit to Cooperstown. They also occupied New Jersey, which had now got to be used as a room for married members of the family.

December        1809, Judge Cooper died, at Lewis' tavern, Albany. His body was brought to the Hall and was placed in The                      . The funeral took place on The                      . This was the second funeral that took place from the house, neither individual having died in it.

Judge Cooper, in his will, left the Hall to his widow for her life, and, after her death, to each of his five sons in succession, or to that one who should choose to accept it, commencing with the eldest, at the sum of \$15,000. At this time the grounds were not much more than half as large as they are now (1840) for, though The adjoining lots belonged to the estate of Judge Cooper, They were not supposed to be included in the devise. As the valuation was supposed to be high, neither of the sons seemed disposed



to accept of the property, when by a rigid construction of the will it must have descended to James, The younger.

From the time of Judge Cooper's death, The house was occupied only by Mrs. Cooper and her son Samuel, until the latter married, on the                    of                    181   , Eliza Bartlett, of Cooperstown. Mr. Samuel Cooper and his wife occupied the Library, which was converted into a bed room for their convenience. The office was now deserted, all the papers of the family, having been removed to an office constructed by Mr. Isaac Cooper, for that purpose.

Some of the furniture mentioned is now at Fynmere. The sideboard, the "hand organ," and the Fenimore Table are all in the dining-room. Many of the books which belonged to William Cooper and his family and some of the silverware are also at Fynmere.

Some years ago there was a curious story about Otsego Hall started by one of the Smiths of Philadelphia, one of whose number, R. R. Smith, was a friend of Judge Cooper's, lived at Cooperstown for a time, and kept the settlement shop. The Smiths owned some of the Otego Patent about twenty miles west of Cooperstown on the Otego Creek. There, about 1774, one of them built a small frame building and dubbed it "Smith's Hall." It is still standing about half a mile north of Laurens to the east of the main road on the west side of the Otego Creek. It is known locally as "Smith's Hall."

Every family has its historian—more or less inac-



curate. When the Smith family history was written, the author looked about for "Smith's Hall"—evidently confusing Otego and Otsego, and pleased by the appearance of Otsego Hall, he claimed it and published one of the well-known prints of it in his history—where it still appears, with the explanation that it was built by one of the Smiths and known as Smith's Hall until Judge Cooper bought and remodelled it, and changed the name to "Otsego Hall." Such is history! No Smith of that family owned any land in the Cooper Patent, and Judge Cooper, of course, built the Hall for himself on his own land.

When Otsego Hall became the property of James Fenimore Cooper, he altered it very materially. The entrance hall was just about twenty-five by fifty feet, and the building itself about seventy-five feet wide by fifty odd deep. The model in the museum at Coopers-town while fairly accurate is in many details wrong.

## A GUIDE IN THE WILDERNESS

I AM including in this volume of sketches an introduction written by me in 1897 for a second edition of a volume of letters by Judge Cooper, published in 1807, under the title of *A Guide in the Wilderness*, and long since out of print. I am doing this, although it involves a certain amount of repetition, as the introduction contains many facts and anecdotes not appearing in the other articles in this book.

### INTRODUCTION

WILLIAM COOPER, the writer of the letters composing the *Guide in the Wilderness*, was born December 2d, 1754, in Byberry Township, then in Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania. He married December 12, 1775, at Burlington, New Jersey, Elizabeth Fenimore, daughter of Richard Fenimore, a descendant of early English settlers in New Jersey. He became interested in large tracts of land in New York and elsewhere shortly after the Revolution, and from that time, until his death in 1809, his principal occupation seems to have

been settling his own lands and those in which he had a joint interest with others.

The time was one of great activity in land settlement and speculation. Few, if any, new settlements had been undertaken during the war and this period of stagnation was naturally followed by large speculative purchases of wild lands by men with money to invest. The rapidity with which land could be disposed of to persons seeking homes is shown by the settlement of the tract of which the village of Cooperstown forms a part. Judge Cooper after examining this land in 1785 offered forty thousand acres for sale to settlers, and he states, that in sixteen days it was all taken up by the poorer class of people, who bought principally small holdings. Here, at the foot of Otsego Lake, in 1787, he laid out a village which was given the name of Coopers-Town. He gradually acquired other large tracts of land in the neighborhood, and had, practically, the management of the settlement of the greater part of what is now Otsego County, either as owner or by agreement with the owners, as well as of lands in other parts of the State which he owned or controlled.

Speculation in American lands was not confined to residents of this country. Large tracts were bought by foreigners. The voluminous correspondence which Judge Cooper has left shows that Necker, and afterwards Madame de Staël, were owners of lands in our

northern counties. Under the stimulus of this speculation land in some localities brought prices which it is doubtful if it has realized since. Judge Cooper paid ten dollars an acre for land in what is now known as the North Woods, which is hardly worth a quarter of that price to-day. Generally, however, his judgment was remarkably good. This is shown by his designation in one of the following letters of the locations which were likely, in his opinion, to become the sites of important towns; among them he mentions the mouth of the Buffalo creek—now Buffalo; the straits of Niagara below the falls—now Lewiston, and the first falls of the Genesee—now Rochester.

When the *Guide in the Wilderness* was written, the only means of transportation were waterways and roads; and the value of lands, present and future, rested largely on their location with reference to rivers and lakes, to roads or the probable line of great highways. Already a canal was under discussion and the suggestions on this subject of Judge Cooper are interesting in view of the subsequent building of the Erie Canal. One element in the speculative value of land, which investors apparently overlooked, was the effect which the clearing of the forests would have on the streams. Large tracts of land, then deemed valuable because they were located on the banks of some stream, navigable for scows and small boats, soon lost the advan-



tage of such a location by the shrinking of the streams, due to the cutting away of the woods.

Great profits were anticipated from the manufacture of maple sugar, and among Cooper's papers is a copy of a letter to the President of the United States (George Washington) which accompanied a present of "sugar and spirits produced from the maple tree" sent by Arthur Noble (after whom the patents of Arthurboro and Nobleboro are named) and Judge Cooper.

The views of the author of the *Guide* on the wisdom of selling in fee, instead of leasing in fee, have been proved sound, by the collapse of the attempt to create in this State a system of land proprietorship based on perpetual leases binding the tenants to the payment of perpetual rent. This course was followed on many of the great estates in New York and resulted in endless litigation and the "anti-rent war."

Life, in what was then the frontier settlement of Cooperstown, was not without its interests other than those of mere business. The village grew and the settlers in the surrounding country prospered. In 1790 Judge Cooper brought his family from Burlington. It consisted of fifteen persons, including servants. In the same year, as appears from a census taken then the village proper contained eight families with a total of thirty-three persons and two slaves; seven houses

and three barns. This "census" is endorsed by the maker as follows: "I may not be perfectly correct, but the difference is not material if any." In 1802 the population had increased to 342 whites and 7 blacks, and in 1816 to 826 persons. Churches, an "academy," and a public library had been started. A newspaper was published in 1795, and at least one has been published in the village continuously since. Cooperstown at the time of the writing of the *Guide in the Wilderness* stood in point of trade and population next to Utica. The former now has about 2900 inhabitants and the latter about 45,000.

Jacob Morris, writing in January, 1796, says:

The brilliancy exhibited at Cooperstown last Tuesday—the Masonic festival—was the admiration and astonishment of all beholders. Upwards of eighty people sat down to one table—some very excellent toasts were drank and the greatest decency and decorum was observed. . . . In the evening we had a splendid ball, sixty couple, thirty in a set, both sets on the floor at the same time, pleasant manners and good dancing.

This was not the first ball given at Cooperstown. There is the record of the trial, in 1791, of a Doctor P——, who was charged with having mixed an emetic with the beverage drunk at a ball given at the "Red Lion." He was tried, convicted of the offense, put in the stocks, and then banished from the village. Ban-

ishment was not an unusual, though probably an unlawful, form of punishment at the time.

The place seems to have been attractive to foreigners, seeking a permanent or temporary home in this country, as many of them found their way to it. For some years an ex-governor of one of the French islands kept a shop in the village. Talleyrand visited Judge Cooper, and wrote verses to one of his daughters, and many of the prominent federalists of the State stayed for longer or shorter periods with him. In 1796 he began a large brick house for his own occupation calling it Otsego Hall. It took the place of an older one known as the Mansion. Here open house was kept and a liberal hospitality dispensed. Traveling was done by short stages, over poor roads, from the home of one friend or acquaintance to that of another, and doubtless the Mansion, and later the Hall, received their share of such patronage. Traditions still live of the good times enjoyed, and the receipted bills for the tuns of madeira consumed have long survived the giver and partakers of the feasts. That dinners were not unusual is apparent from the following provision in the lease of Judge Cooper's house, made in 1798, when he went to Philadelphia for the winter but expected to board with the lessee at times: "When he makes a dinner for his friends, then the said William shall pay three shillings per man to the said Samuel and on all occasions find his own liquors."

The hospitality, if tradition speaks truly, was sometimes enforced with amiable roughness. The story is still told of how Judge Cooper, while driving a sleigh full of guests, stopped at the house of a friend, an ex-officer of the French army, who was living on the shores of Otsego Lake, and asked him to join the party and dine at the Hall. He firmly declined the invitation, but his would-be entertainers were not to be discouraged and carried him forcibly to the dinner. Arrived at the Hall they found, to their delight, that their captive, suffering from the delays and inconveniences of frontier housekeeping, was without a shirt. Judge Cooper, however, supplied him with one, and, as the involuntary guest was frequently heard to say afterwards, was so hospitable as to give him a ruffled one.

The head of a settlement was subject to other demands than those on his wardrobe. One of the French settlers borrowed of Judge Cooper some fifty dollars. As time went on the latter noticed that his debtor's visits to the Hall became less and less frequent until they finally ceased. Meeting the man one day, he remonstrated with him, telling him that so small a matter should not cause him annoyance and urging him not to allow it to interfere with his visits to the Hall. The Frenchman, however, felt that the fifty dollars weighed heavily on his honor, and that he could not



partake of the Judge's hospitality until the debt was paid. Not long afterwards Judge Cooper saw his debtor approaching him with every manifestation of joy, waving his hat and shouting: "Good news, Judge Cooper, Good news— My mother is dead! My mother is dead! I pay you the fifty dollars."

Judge Cooper seems to have prided himself on his physical strength and agility. He offered a lot (probably 150 acres of land) as a reward to any man on the settlement who could throw him. The challenge was accepted, the Judge finally thrown by one of the settlers, and the lot conveyed to his conqueror.

William Cooper was appointed First Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Otsego County in 1791 and held this office until October, 1800. His appointment, so the commission reads, was for "such time as he shall well behave himself therein or until he shall attain the age of sixty years." His retirement from office was not due to either limitation. The commission is signed by George Clinton, recited to be "Governor of our said State, General and Commander-in-Chief of all the militia and Admiral of the navy of the same." He was twice elected to Congress, in 1795 and in 1799, and once lost his election.

The interest in politics during the earlier years of the United States far exceeded that of to-day, and entered largely into the life of all the inhabitants. Nearly

every elector seems to have been a politician. The letters of the time are full of politics and party animosity. Judge Cooper, a Federalist, was a prominent member of his party and devoted much of his time to its cause. He was on intimate terms with its leaders, and in constant correspondence with many of them.

The population in the country was scanty, and as the franchise was restricted by a property qualification, the voters were comparatively few; but the enthusiasm was unlimited. The polls could be kept open five days, so as to accommodate all wanting to vote, and as there was no secret ballot the excitement was constant and intense. Jacob Morris, writing of an election in Unadilla (Otsego County) at which 141 votes were cast, and the federalist majority was *five*, after dwelling on the completeness of the victory, says: "Our success was wholly ascribable to the federalist spirit of the Butter-nuts; the hardy sons of this new settlement, rushed over the Otego hills, an irresistible phalanx"—and then referring to his political opponents, adds:

That since in political dust they are laid

They're all dead and d——d and no more can be said.

There are frequent complaints in the letters of fraud and of influence and prominence of foreigners, especially the Irish. Fear for the future of the country and the stability of property is expressed in almost the

terms used to-day. The federalists are "friends of order" and their opponents "anti-Christians," "enemies of the country," etc. One prominent resident of Otsego county and of Philadelphia, writes: "We are busy about electing a senator in the State legislature. The contest is between B. R. M——, a gentleman, and consequently a federalist, and a dirty stinking anti-federal Jew tavern-keeper called I. I——. But, Judge, the friends to order here don't understand the business, they are uniformly beaten, we used to order these things better at Cooperstown."

Philip Schuyler, writing to Judge Cooper of the election of 1791, says:

I believe fasting and prayer to be good, but if you had only fasted and prayed I am sure we should not have had seven hundred votes from your country—report says that you was very civil to the young and handsome of the sex, that you flattered the old and ugly, and even embraced the toothless and decrepid, in order to obtain votes. When will you write a treatise on electioneering? Whenever you do, afford only a few copies to your friends.

Campaigns were not, however, always conducted on such peaceful and pleasant lines, as appears from the following affidavits, a number of printed copies of which are among Judge Cooper's papers, endorsed in his handwriting, "Oath how I whipped Cochran." They were apparently used as campaign documents.

The James Cochran referred to was a political opponent, and defeated Cooper for Congress at an earlier date.

Jessie Hyde, of the town of Warran, being duly sworn, saith, that on the sixteenth day of October in the year 1799, he this deponent, did see James Cochran make an assault upon William Cooper in the public highway. That the said William Cooper defended himself, and in the struggle Mr. Cochran, in a submissive manner, requested of Judge Cooper to let him go.

JESSIE HYDE.

Sworn this sixteenth day of

October, 1799, before me,

RICHARD EDWARDS, Master in Chancery.

OTSEGO COUNTY, SS.

Personally appeared Stephen Ingalls, one of the constables of the town of Otsego, and being duly sworn, deposeth and saith, that he was present at the close of a bruising match between James Cochran, Esq., and William Cooper, Esq., on or about the sixteenth of October last, when the said James Cochran confessed to the said William Cooper these words: "I acknowledge you are too much of a buffer for me," at which time it was understood, as this deponent conceives, that Cochran was confessedly beaten.

STEPHEN INGALS.

Sworn before me this sixth

day of November, 1799.

JOSHUA DEWEY, Justice of the Peace.

In the election of 1792 the State canvassers, acting upon the advice of Aaron Burr, rejected, for alleged



irregularity in the manner of their return, certain votes and among them those of Otsego County, and by so doing changed the result of the election, defeated Jay, and declared Clinton elected Governor. This action caused great indignation among the federalists and seems to have been unjustified. As a means of diverting attention from it, a petition, charging Judge Cooper with having unduly influenced the voters in his county, was presented to the State legislature. An investigation was had, and the petition finally dismissed as frivolous and vexatious. Judging from the personal letters on the subject written Cooper at the time, the charges were groundless.

Judge Cooper died at Albany, December 22, 1809, as the result of a blow on the head, struck from behind, by an opponent as they were leaving a political meeting.

This *Guide in the Wilderness* was not published until after his death, and it gives an excellent idea of the man. The letters composing it show Judge Cooper to have been a close observer of nature, a man who saw and understood the value of the natural phenomena among which he lived, and a student of character. That he was of a kindly disposition the letters which exist among his papers show. He made some bitter enemies, as was inevitable with a man leading so active a life and taking so great an interest in politics as he did, but he had many devoted friends.

William Sampson, to whom the letters composing *The Guide in the Wilderness* were written, was a well-known lawyer. He was born in Londonderry in 1764 and died in New York in 1836. He was the son of a Presbyterian minister, and an officer of the Irish Volunteers. He was counsel at Dublin for members of the society of United Irishmen. After the failure of the revolution in 1798, he fled from Ireland but was brought back to Dublin and eventually allowed his freedom upon the condition of his living in Portugal, where he was afterwards imprisoned at the instance of the English government, but was finally set at liberty and came to this country. He wrote a number of books, among them his own memoirs, of which three editions were published.

The following extract from a letter of his to Judge Cooper explains the reason for the publication of the *Guide* in Dublin and fixes the date of the letters as prior to 1807.

SIR:—Since you left us I have been too much occupied with moving, attendance on the courts, and other matters to have made much progress respecting our little work. I have however employed my spare moments toward making a fair transcript of your letters. The booksellers here give little encouragement, or to say better, very great discouragement to any literary object, and unless they have it for nothing to themselves they seem to make it a point to keep it down. But there is a ship about to sail shortly for

Belfast or Londonderry, in both of which quarters I have brothers, men of liberal minds and passionate for useful knowledge. I have no doubt your letters will interest them highly, and the public no less. And although neither your object in writing those letters nor mine in publishing them was to get money, yet I should think that going to the expense of printing a work so likely to be productive to a publisher would be useless. I wish to have your consent before I take any further step, and shall be glad to hear how your health has been and what there is new in your woods

. . . I am sir,

Your friend and humble servant,

WILLIAM SAMPSON.

NEW YORK, 12th of May, 1807.

In this republication, the original text has been strictly followed, and there appear all of the mistakes in spelling and grammatical errors existing in the pamphlet as first published—for some of them the author probably is responsible, for others the printer.

Albany, March, 1897.

## Family Notes

### WILLIAM COOPER

WILLIAM COOPER was born in 1755 in Byberry township, a part of old Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania.

His father was James Cooper; the family were all Quakers; the first of them to come to America was James Cooper, of Stratford on Avon, where there was a large family of Coopers living in and about Stratford. He came to Trenton, N. J., in 1680 and bought a "plantation" near there; he sold this a few years later and moved to Byberry Township where he bought another; he owned considerable land in and about Philadelphia including a piece on Arch Street, four hundred and fifty-five feet front, but only fifty-one feet deep. He died December 4, 1732, leaving a good deal of real estate, and a will drawn in his own handwriting but unsigned. He was born in 1661. It is said that he had a shop of some kind on the Arch Street property, at the corner of Second Street; he is sometimes described as a merchant.

His son William, who died in 1736, had a plantation



of one hundred and sixty acres in Byberry, upon which apparently he lived, in addition to land in Philadelphia.

William's son, James, was born in Byberry in 1729; he owned a plantation at Buckingham, Bucks Co., but lived in Byberry, where Judge William Cooper was born December 2, 1755, in his father's residence, near where the Somerton Post Office stood in 1885.

The wife of the first James, Hester or Esther, was the progenitrix of the family saints; she seems to have been a preacher of prominence and as such much admired; she traveled all over the country addressing meetings and there is a long account of her in *The Friend* (vol. xxviii, p. 51) and of the shortcomings of her husband, James—and of his repentance. It is an amusing illustration of the religious atmosphere and activity then prevailing in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

### ESTHER COOPER

Of this Friend we know little, except that she was in good standing amongst the valuable ministers of the day, and one who was concerned to be found faithful in the exercise of the gift committed to her. At what time she came forth in the ministry we know not, but she had a portion of trial to fit her for the work. Her husband was one who went into the separation with George Keith, and whose estrangement from Friends must have been cause of great concern to her. But he was restored, and perhaps the testimony which he gave against himself may have sufficient historical importance to merit a place here.

Dear Friends,—I am constrained to give forth this testimony against myself, for caution to others, desiring that none may be tossed to and fro, as I have been, sometimes holding this opinion, and sometimes that opinion, and sometimes neither.

O Friends, how have I been hurried from mountain to hill in self-conceited imagination, and in the exaltation of that serpentine wisdom in which I strove furiously in the dark night of apostacy that has been over me, vainly endeavoring to overturn the way and work of the Lord. In this, "blackness of darkness," I find I was a wanderer from the presence of God, and subject to all the twistings of Satan. But blessed be the Lord who hath once more extended his rod of correction in mercy, and hath not left my soul in hell, but has let me see my dangerous condition. Glory to his holy name for ever! Now, Friends, I do assure you that for a time I thought myself safe, and in that time I abused Friends and the Truth, with all the calumnies and opprobrious speeches and actions I could invent, being persuaded by the devil and his agents, that I did well. In so doing, I neither spared cost nor pains. But blessed be the Lord who found me out in the height and full career of these blind and wicked practices. That very day I read that paper<sup>1</sup> so irreverently before a great congregation there met and gathered to worship the Lord.

To the grief of my heart I remember with what rigour I introduced it in the window where I stood. When I had so done, people being gathered in the streets of Burlington into

<sup>1</sup> This paper was a challenge from George Keith to the yearly meeting then sitting at Burlington, to hear "an appeal" which he had printed. James Cooper, although the door of the meeting-house was open, climbed up into one of the windows, and read part of it whilst that ancient and honourable Friend, Thomas Janney was at prayer. This act he might well call irreverent.

many companies disputing, and I as hot as any, having some respite, I went into George Hutchinson's house, and to George Keith in a chamber there, where I found him alone. Now said I, "George, why art thou here, and we are at war in the streets." He answered, knocking one hand upon another, "I have done with them, and I hope, when we die, they and I shall not both go to the same place." These words, at that very instant, struck such amazement upon me, that I trembled, saying within myself, he hopes well for himself, but bad for them, surely this man wants charity.

I say in the presence of God, and in the sincerity of my heart, I am truly sorrowful for my outgoing, and I do condemn, and let it be condemned, all and everything that I have been concerned in, wherein the truth of God hath suffered or his people. Particularly the late separation with all the whimsys, and notions thereof, and all the writing and printing of that kind, and all the scandalizing and laying open friends and brethren, whether true or false, as knowing it unchristian;—with all those revolution doctrines,<sup>1</sup> and non-belief of the perpetuity of the damned in hell. I desire that the Lord may forgive me; and blessed be his eternal name. I feel in measure that he hath. He hath seen my exercises, and given ear to my cry, when no eye saw me but his alone. Blessed be his name for ever. I can say he hath once more given me an earnest of his love, otherwise I had sank under the weight of my burden. O he hath let me feel his rod which hath driven me to make this confession. I have not done it of my own will, neither am I driven (thereto) by others. Glory to his name for ever, can my soul truly say. Friends, I can say to the praise of God, and in behalf of the Truth, that I have felt

<sup>1</sup>George Keith's doctrine of transmigration of souls.

the ancient arm of love to the refreshment of my soul, since I set my face homewards again, at times; but in an especial manner in this great assembly (wherein) the Lord made me willing to take shame to myself that he might have the praise, and truth be cleared. O Friends, take it from one that speaks his experience, and can say the overshadowing love of God is wanting amongst those that are gone from you, notwithstanding their boasting. What shall I say, this is the truth, and there is not another, and the panting of my soul is that the Lord may bring out many more, as he hath me, many of whom I know (departed) through me, and with me fell into the pit or gulf. God forgive me, for being so forward an instrument in that wicked work, which produced such bad effects, and protect me with his holy protection from henceforth. Friends, great hath been my exercise, since the Lord drove me home again, all which I took patiently, knowing my deserts.

Now, Friends, that you will forgive and forget as much as in you lies, all that I have acted, spoken, or done against the truth of God, or his people in general, and against any particular Friends; some of which are *gone* to their own home. O I desire when I finish my course, my soul may rest with their's, and I desire I may be received into the unity of the church. Your distressed brother,

JAMES COOPER JR.

PHILAD., 19th of Seventh mo., 1695.

This paper was presented by James Cooper to the Yearly Meeting held in Philadelphia, and the reception of it was minuted. He afterwards became a useful member of the Monthly Meeting of Philadelphia, and one in good repute.

Esther Cooper was much made use of in the discipline of our religious Society, and we can trace some of her labours in the ministry. In the Seventh month, 1701, she was set



at liberty to visit the meetings of Friends in Maryland and Virginia, and a valuable minister, named Elizabeth Key, bore her company. In the Third month, 1702, she had the unity of her friends in a prospect of service about Egg Harbour, and again she had Elizabeth Key for her companion. She appears to have frequently visited the meetings near Philadelphia. We find her with another fellow labourer in the gospel, Mary Lawson, visiting the meetings at Plymouth, Byberry, Abington, and Frankford—with Martha Chalkley, at Germantown, Groynned, and Abington. We can trace her at these meetings many times, sometimes, having the company of Hugh Durborough, sometimes of his wife Elizabeth, sometimes of George Gray, sometimes of Sarah Goodson, all of whom were ministers in good esteem. We can follow her in her labours of love until about the middle of the year 1706, after which our only trace of her is this short minute.

Esther Cooper, wife of James Cooper, departed this life the 13th of the Tenth mo. 1706. She was raised in testimony here.

The first William Cooper married Mary Groome, whose grandfather, Samuel, was one of the twelve proprietors of East New Jersey in 1681–82; he is described as “Samuel Groome, of the parish of Stepney, in the County of Middlesex, Mariner.” As early as 1676 he was cruising off Maryland in command of his own ship, probably looking for a stray Spaniard, for peace-loving as Quakers were, they were willing to smite the enemy when profitable opportunity offered; and perhaps “Samuel Groome, Mariner,” was not then a Quaker.

William Carter, Mayor of Philadelphia in 1711, was not a Quaker and did not come to America for his soul's sake, but to escape the penalty, death, I believe, for killing deer in one of the King's forests. His daughter, Ann, married William Hibes and their daughter, Hannah, married the second James Cooper at Christ Church, Philadelphia, in 1750.

William Cooper, of Cooperstown, married Elizabeth Fenimore, daughter of Richard Fenimore of Rancocus, N. J., December 12, 1774. He lived in Burlington, N. J., until his removal to Cooperstown in 1788. He moved his family in 1789, and James Fenimore Cooper was born in Burlington in that year.

The Fenimores came from Finmere originally Fene-mere or Fennimore, Oxfordshire, England, and are enrolled in Domesday Book as holding a manor of that name, which they held until the sixteenth century.

Of the five generations of Cooper men, who have been especially associated with Cooperstown, not one was born in that village. Many of these facts are from an elaborate genealogy prepared by the late W. W. Cooper of Washington about 1885.

The public activities of, and offices held, by all of these men can be found in Proud's History of Pennsylvania and Mulford's History of New Jersey. Most of them were active in public life and held important offices from time to time.

William Cooper was a great pioneer; he began the settlement at Cooperstown in 1785, with about sixteen thousand dollars in cash; his inventory on November 16, 1797, was as follows:

	Dols.	Cts.
Total value of lands unsold	165	788.00
In Bonds and Mortgages	162	312.00
	328	100.00
One share in the New City Tavern in Broadway, New York		375.00
	328	475.00

His total land holdings aggregated over three quarters of a million acres.

When he died in 1809 he was supposed to be worth about seven hundred thousand dollars. He made, besides Cooperstown, large settlements at Williamstown (De Kalb), Coopers Village, Coopers, and other places. He was an active Federalist and was appointed First Judge of Otsego County in 1791; he was representative in Congress for the Sessions of December 7, 1795–March 3, 1797, and December 2, 1799–March 3, 1801. He died in Albany, December 2, 1809.

It is said that, as a youth, he ran away from home on account of some disagreement with his father and that some of the other of the children went with him. He was a Quaker, but as appears from the family papers was expelled from that Society. All of the Coopers

and Fenimores were Quakers. When he left Burlington for Cooperstown in 1789 his wife at the last minute sat down in her father's library chair and refused to come. The carriage and wagons were loaded, and at the door, so William picked up the chair and his wife and put them both in a wagon. The chair is the old Queen Ann arm chair now at Fynmere.

Judge Cooper's personal appearance is made fairly well known to us by his portraits: a Gilbert Stuart, a John Trumbull, and one by an unknown artist. In addition to these we have his son's description in the letter from Canajoharie, written about 1833, and published in this volume, and the following, quoted from an address delivered at a meeting of the Oneida Historical Society; he is mentioned as one of the four great pioneers of New York State; the other three are Rieter Evertsen Hulst, Sir William Johnson and Col. Charles Williamson; of William Cooper in 1785, it says:

"He was then thirty-one years of age, in the full health and vigor of perfect manhood, nearly six feet in height, of fine figure, with a rich, deep complexion."

## JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER was born September 15, 1789. He married Susan Augusta de Lancey, January 1, 1811, and died at Cooperstown, September 14, 1851.



He was educated at Cooperstown and by Rev. Thomas Ellison, Rector of St. Peter's Church, Albany, until he entered Yale College at thirteen, in the Class of 1806. He was expelled in his junior year. His father sent him to sea, as a common sailor before the mast, as a preparation for entering the Navy. He spent one year cruising in foreign waters and then was appointed a midshipman. He resigned from the Navy at about the time of his marriage. He lived in Westchester County, New York City, and Cooperstown until he sailed for Europe in 1826. He spent seven years abroad, and on his return in 1833, took up his residence at Cooperstown and lived there until his death in 1851. In 1826 his name was changed from Cooper to Fenimore-Cooper, by the Legislature of the State of New York. He did this in fulfillment of a promise made his mother years before.

### PAUL FENIMORE COOPER

PAUL FENIMORE COOPER, my father, was born in New York City, February 3, 1824. He graduated from Hobart College, and for a short time attended the Harvard Law School. He practiced law in Albany until his death, April 21, 1895. He married, at Cooperstown, Mary Fuller Barrows, June 28, 1855, a daughter of Rev. Eleazer Storrs Barrows and Catherine Chloe Fuller, one of the daughters of Dr. Thomas Fuller of Cooperstown.

The usual family genealogist has been active in all these families, and there are books on the Barrows and Fuller families and in England one on the Fenimores.

### SIR WILLIAM JOHNSON

SIR WILLIAM JOHNSON was one of the greatest and most interesting figures in Colonial history. He was born in Ireland and lived there until about his twenty-second year when he came to New York.

His mother was Anne Warren, a sister of Admiral Sir Peter Warren, who brought him to America. Sir Peter married Susanna de Lancey ("Sweet Susan de Lancey"), a sister of Lieut.-Governor James de Lancey, who was my great-great-grandfather; and lived much of his life in New York. He owned, in addition to land near and in New York City, a large tract in the Mohawk Valley, known as Warrensbush or Warrensborough, and brought his nephew, William Johnson, to this country to take charge of it about 1737.

Sir Peter commanded the English fleet at the siege of Louisburg. He was a very successful naval commander and accumulated a large fortune in prize money. His share of the loot of one captured fleet alone amounting to over three hundred thousands pounds. He is buried in Westminster Abbey.

Sir William Johnson soon became a great landholder in his own right; his Royal grant on the Mohawk con-

taining thousands of acres and his Dreamland tract on the Susquehanna thirty thousand. He was a Colonel in the British Army, and commanded troops and fought at Niagara, Lake George, and in other engagements.

His greatest claim to distinction, however, was his handling of the Indians of the Six Nations, the most warlike, and dreaded of all our Indians. He was appointed Indian Commissioner by the English government, and for years kept the Iroquois friendly to the colony. He was adored by and almost lived with them. King Hendrick, Red Jacket, and Brant were his intimate and devoted friends and constantly at his home.

His first considerable house was Fort Johnson, just west of Amsterdam and his later residence, Johnson Hall, at Johnstown; both are still standing.

He had one son, Sir John Johnson, by Katherine Weisenburg, known as his first wife; after her death he took as his housekeeper Mollie Brant, the sister of Brant, the great Mohawk Chief; by her he had a large family. He probably never was legally married. There is a letter in existence written by James Fenimore Cooper which says that Hendrick Frey, one of Sir William's friends and executors, told Judge Cooper that Sir William had told him that he never had been married. His only white son, Sir John, married Mary Watts, whose mother was Anne de Lancey, a sister of Lady Warren.

The details of Sir William's life are told in several biographies, and this note is merely to tell my descendants of their connection with him and Sir John.

Sir William died just before the Revolution broke out. Sir John was a Tory and left an evil reputation on account of his attacks on the Mohawk Valley settlers, in which he was associated with Walter Butler and certain of the Indians of the Six Nations.

### "TANGIER" SMITH

"TANGIER SMITH," so called, was Col. William Smith. He was a Colonel in the British Army at a very early age, and was Governor of Tangiers. He is said to have been a great favorite of the King's, which accounted for his early promotion. He married Martha Tunstall of Putney, County of Surrey, at Tangiers in 1675. He came to New York and settled there. He was Lord of the Manor of St. George, on Long Island; the Manor is said originally to have been fifty miles wide on the ocean and that width across Long Island.

Among the old papers in my possession is one, yellow with age, on which are set forth many details of the life of "Tangier" Smith; purporting to be copied from a book kept by William and some of his descendants.

One entry reads as follows:



Col. William Smith was born at Newton near Higham Ferrers, in Northamptonshire, England, February 2nd 1655. He seems to have been in great favor with Charles 2nd, which was continued during the reigns of James 2nd, William and Mary and Queen Anne, Charles 2nd, in 1675, appointed him Governor of Tangiers—in 1683 he returned to England and embarked in trade. He arrived with his family in New York August 6th 1686—and is supposed to have removed to Brookhaven 1689.

He had a large family; seven daughters and six sons. One of the latter, Henry, "born in the Royall City of Tangier in Africa, was Joined in holy wedlock to Anna Shepard of Charleston in the County of Middlesex by the Revd Mr. Cotton Mather and Col. John Phillips" in 1704.

May 23, 1692, was, if the record speaks truly, a disagreeable day for "Tangier" Smith:

Mr Smith & my selfe went to ye South, ye nexte day after wee came home Mr Smith was taken with a pain beeloe his lefte shoulder Blade. it continued to groe worse & I had thoughts hee might a sprained or hurt some vaine by lifting me upon horseback in his armes it continued and shout to his left brest—I put ottes fryed in vinegar to his side and he found some ease—then I put wormwood fried to his side and yt maide his heade ake and maide his side much worse on Sunday the 29 of May my dere Billy was lett Blut on ye lefte arme—blead 8 ounces and drinkd a porringer of muten brought & he was not sicke when ye blod stoped— I allso put a plastor to his side whare the pain was & with the blessing of God it was very well.

He had a bad time again in September, 1695, when "He was taken with a collocke and was ready to burst"; he recovered and lived until 1705, when he died, only fifty years old.

One of his daughters, Martha, married Caleb Heathcote, who came to New York from England about 1686. The cause of Caleb's leaving home, and in due time becoming one of our ancestors, has been handed down for over two centuries; he was engaged to a very beautiful girl and took his elder brother, Gilbert, to see her, Gilbert was afterwards Sir Gilbert Heathcote, one of the originators and first president of the Bank of England, she may have foreseen the future; in any event she and Gilbert fell in love and married. The heart-broken Caleb fled to the Colony of New York. The lady was Hester Raynor. Anne Heathcote, Caleb's daughter, married James de Lancey, Chief Justice and Governor of the Colony of New York; James was the son of Etienne de Lancey, a Huguenot who left France on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and his wife Anne Van Courtland, who, in turn, was the daughter of Stephanus Van Cortlandt and Gertruy Schuyler, daughter of Philip Schuyler and the charming Margritta Von Schlechtenhorst. A son of James de Lancey and Anne Heathcote, John Peter de Lancey, married Elizabeth Floyd, and their daughter, Susan Augusta de Lancey, was the wife of James Fenimore Cooper. This

is the story of our New York Colonial ancestry, in brief; you can find it in great detail in Jones' History of New York in the Revolution.

The de Lanceys were Tories and all the men, but one, held commissions in the British army or navy and saw service against the colonies in the Revolution. This cost them their American land, all of which was confiscated and sold.

An amusing story is told of John Peter; he was educated at Harrow and Cambridge, and was a Captain in the Royal Irish Fusiliers; he went back to England after peace was made in 1783. The Colonel of his regiment was very overbearing and in the habit of insulting the subalterns. It got to be so bad that his officers agreed that next time he insulted one of them, they would draw lots and the one to whom the lot fell would challenge the Colonel—a capital offense in those days. When lots were drawn the fatal number fell to John Peter de Lancey; he promptly challenged the Colonel, who, instead of fighting him, reported the affair to the Horse Guards. John Peter knew that the game was up; so he put his family on board a boat at Greenwich; watched until he saw the Colonel coming out of the Horse Guards and caned him. His horse was waiting and he made his escape to Greenwich, got on the boat and sailed to this country.

The irate King struck his name from the Army List

with his own hand; and John Peter avoided England for the rest of his life. He is the portly man in white waistcoat whose portrait hangs in the library. It's a pretty tale, and anyway the portrait is of a man who might have done such a thing.

Years ago I was told the story of the wooing of Margritta, wife of Philip Schuyler; it seems that Philip, who was big and stout, and Margritta's father, came to blows on the trail near Rensselaerwyck, in a dispute over pelts or tobacco or rum; Philip was winning when Margritta rushed to her father's aid and beat up Philip. He was so much impressed by her fistic ability and by her value as an ally, in those days of red men and danger, that he married her. All this about the year 1650. I can't vouch for the story but it was an old man's tale when I was a boy in Albany, where many people still spoke the Dutch of the seventeenth century, and was told me by a well-known local antiquarian.







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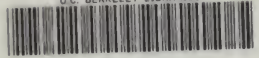
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